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FAMOUS CRIMES

PAST AND PRESENT

ONE · PENNY

THE MURDER BY WILLIAM CORDER, IN THE RED BARN.

Vol. VII.—No. 79.

The Cruel and Calculated Crime of WILLIAM CORDER.

"Dream on, dream on
Of bloody deeds and death."
—SHAKESPEARE, "King Richard III," Sc. 3.

PART I.

NO great universal event has fixed itself so steadfastly and so firmly upon the public mind as the Murder in the Red Barn at Polestead. The name of the unfortunate victim of a selfish and capricious libertine has become as familiar as a household word, and the circumstances of the tragedy are so well known and so often discussed as to have developed into a mere matter of historical and authenticated fact. Greenacre is now no more than a fragment of a legend; John Williams, of Ratcliffe Highway infamy, is no more than the most unsubstantial of shades; Daniel Good, with his vulgar amours, has deservedly sunk into the merciful waters of oblivion; but William Corder is as well remembered as Wellington or Marlborough, and few there are who could not, off-hand, tell you something of his history. In fact, the case is so well known, and has been so often re-told, as to necessitate, on my part, some excuse for again bringing it before the public already familiar with its principal features and the subsequent execution of the delinquent himself. But if the event can no longer, from constant repetition, be described as "caviare to the general," it must not be forgotten that much has been written about the Polestead Murder which is untrue, and that in many of the best and most circumstantial accounts a great deal has been omitted, intentionally or otherwise, which it were well to take into account in attempting to form a just estimate of the crime and the criminal. It is the boast, if one may so describe a sentiment which has animated them throughout, of those connected with this standard work on Crime that each case should be dealt with in the most exhaustive possible manner, or, rather, that is the desire of the Proprietors, and our readers have doubtless observed that these wishes have been faithfully carried out. The accounts given in these columns of crimes of historical interest have not been taken from one, two, three, or even half a dozen sources alone. The expert chosen to take a particular case in hand has gone, in every instance, to every possible channel of information, and no stone has been left unturned which might procure the entire facts and secure the most absolute accuracy. "The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," has been the cry of our Editor from the first, with the result that every possible inquiry has been made and every source of information tested before the crime is re-told in these columns. This rule, which has guided the conduct of this journal from the first, has applied to the case of William Corder. In our anxiety to procure the exact facts, I was despatched some weeks ago to the little Suffolk village where, eighty-one years ago, Maria Martin, the mole-catcher's daughter, died at the hands of her recalcitrant seducer, there to ascertain how much was still remembered of the tragedy, and if any of the descendants of the parties implicated remained in this district of East Anglia. Nor was my visit barren of result. The Red Barn itself, beneath whose floor Corder buried his murdered love, was demolished a few years after the execution of the stout, florid young farmer; but I was shown the identical plot of ground on which that sinister building stood, and a farmhouse belonging at that time to Mrs. Corder, the widowed mother of the murderer, is still in existence, and was pointed out to me by an ancient rustic, whose father "saw Will'um hang." That interesting event took place at Bury St. Edmunds, on August 11, 1828, and in the gaol there they can show you the irons with which the murderer was confined after his conviction. Still more interesting is a bound "Life of Corder" in the Public Library at Bury. This tome is bound in a piece of the skin, prepared and tanned, of the malefactor, which was exhibited for a long time afterwards at the shop of a leather-seller in Oxford Street in that town. I handled this volume with much reverence, under the strict surveillance of the proud librarian, but from the brief glimpse I secured of its contents, I imagine that the author, whoever he may have been, sacrificed much of the interests of truth in an effort to make the work curious, interesting, and sensational.

At Colchester I heard a curious story related in connection with the execution of William Corder. At the old theatre there "Macbeth" was played on the night of August 11, 1828, by a mediocre stock company. One member of the audience had been to Bury that day to see the end of Maria Martin's murderer, and was weary of giving more or less full, true, and particular accounts to importunate inquirers of the hanging and the demeanour of the convict. When the actor who impersonated Duncan uttered the line:

"Is execution done on Cawdor?"

the gentleman "aloft" grew impatient, and shouted out, "Yes! I tell you, yes! Why, I saw him hanged to-day at Bury!" The actor looked disconcerted, but recalled the similarity between the names "Cawdor" and "Corder," and the rest of the audience smiled.

I may also mention that the house at Ealing to which Corder removed after his marriage—his wife was a schoolmistress, and very well-to-do—and where he was captured, is still standing. I do not suppose that many who pass it are aware of the fact that a great murderer was once "taken" there.

In putting before my readers the whole circumstances of this famous case, I may commence by ringing up the curtain and placing my puppets in position on the stage. Here are our dramatis personæ:

Martin: Christian name unknown; a mole-catcher; poor, but honest.

Maria: His daughter, aged 26; fair, but frail.

Mrs. Martin: Her mother, the dreamer of dreams; sober and respectable.

Mrs. Corder: William's mother; well-to-do, and honourable.

Mrs. Corder: William's wife; faithful to the last; and William Corder: The villain.

Time: May, 1827. Scene: Polestead, in Suffolk.

Let me briefly describe the various characters. Martin, the mole-catcher, has been represented to me as a sober, respectable, God-fearing peasant, with a great dread of the law and a vast respect for his superiors in station. Although one would imagine that even a Carnegie could hardly have hoped to have made a fortune in the pursuit and capture of the foolish mole, it is a fact that our Martin made money out of this calling, and that he was able, though the family lived in a small and humble cottage, to bestow a fair education, as times went then, upon his offspring. Of these interesting tokens of the connubial bed, Maria was the father's pet, and the pride. Possessed of more than ordinary personal advantages, this young person was beset by admirers since her early teens, and morality being at that time no more prevalent than it is said to be now in that district, Maria was speedily the victim of her own attractions and the lustful desires of her masculine contemporaries. At fifteen she was only a maiden by courtesy—a description which a certain French writer attached to the Marchioness of Brinvilliers at the age of seven!—at twenty she was less bountiful of her favours, but could still be wooed and won; at twenty-six—— But we anticipate.

Maria Martin was, in appearance, plump, and of good figure, with fine blue eyes, and a complexion and skin which a duchess might have envied. Her features were irregular, but pleasing, and, in spite of her lack of virtue, her address was modest and her deportment correct. She lacked rather the will and the strength to refuse her admirers than, I think, the inclination, and in any case was somewhat more sinned against than sinning. At this lapse of time, heaven knows, we need not be hard upon her. Mrs. Martin, the mother of the interesting Maria, was a stout party, with very little of superstition or of romance in her homely composition; nevertheless, she provided the real sensation of the drama by dreaming on three consecutive nights that her daughter was murdered, and buried beneath the Red Barn. Mrs. Corder was a staid, straight-laced woman, the widow of a rather substantial yeoman, and was much respected and looked up to in the village; but she was a trifle bigoted and narrow-minded, and she strongly resented her son's liaison with the mole-catcher's daughter, and would have strenuously opposed a marriage between them. This fact must be borne in mind in estimating the strength of the motive for the subsequent crime.

Corder's wife does not come on in this act, but may be represented at once as a good, weak, faithful, and rather foolish woman, who, having married a man of whose antecedents she knew nothing, struck bravely to her bad bargain, and defended her William to the last.

The villain of the piece, William Corder, was not above twenty-four years of age at the time of these events. He was five feet five inches in height, and presented a very powerful and muscular appearance. Not exactly a repulsive-looking young man, he was still far from handsome. Secretly he lived a rather loose and dissolute life, and this was apparent in his colouring, expression, and general demeanour. His mouth was full and sensual, his lips red and puffy, and the cheeks round, rosy, and bloated. The eyes were somewhat small and furtive, and the hair of neutral tint. Beyond a slight—a very slight—side whisker, he was clean-shaven. He dressed after the manner of a fairly prosperous young farmer, and had a rather horsy aspect, although, as a matter of fact, there is no evidence that he was inclined that way. He bore a fairly good character at Polestead, for his indiscretions as a rule took place farther afield, and was rather liked in the district than otherwise.

About the year 1820, Maria Martin committed an act of imprudence with a gentleman of fortune residing at no great distance from her father's cottage, and the result of this liaison was the birth of a child, in whose support the father was in the habit of sending a sum of money weekly. The gentleman in question was abroad at the time of the murder, and as his family is still a well-known one, and respected in that part of England, he shall have nothing to do with this eventful history. Having made his one entrance, and bowed to the expectant audience, he can take off his stage raiment and go home.

Early in the year 1826, William Corder, weary of petty conquests in the lists of love at Ipswich, Bury, Yarmouth, and Colchester, turned his attention nearer home, and allowed his eyes to repose often and long upon the fair and plump proportions of the amiable Maria. Informed of her lapses from strict morality, he armed himself with the knowledge and laid a deliberate siege to her heart, succeeding very soon in bringing about the fall of the fortress. Maria became his in the fullest sense of the word, and soon could refuse her Corder no pledge of her affection. She became pregnant. From that time she commenced to persuade William to make an honest woman of her, and it is barely possible that at one time he really did seriously contemplate the advisability of making her his wife. At any rate, he professed for her a great and abiding affection, and became a frequent visitor to the cottage of her father. Girls in Maria's station do not marry prosperous farmers every day of the week. Corder was well-to-do, and had expectations. Doubtless Mr. and Mrs. Martin had no objection to William as a son-in-law.

The infant which Maria Martin bore to her lover—Corder, I mean—died in the most mysterious manner

Walking with his gun.

within a few hours of its birth, and, from the fact of its having died without any known previous illness, and of Corder having disposed of the body in a manner which he never would explain, it was conjectured pretty universally, if we may use the phrase, that it had come unfairly by its death. However much this notion may have prevailed after the subsequent apprehension of Corder, it does not appear that any evidence was ever produced to support it; but it transpired that the unhappy girl made

use of the circumstance as a means of endeavouring to coerce Corder to fulfil his promise to marry her.

Of her many importunities Corder soon grew tired. His passing fancy for her killed by satiety, his hunger for

With a pickaxe over his shoulder.

her satisfied after many full meals, he began to hanker after absolute freedom, and to sigh for fresh woods and pastures new. His mother strongly opposed even his intimacy with such folk as the Martins seemed to her, and her influence, or, rather, the influence of her money, was strong; for Corder was an avaricious creature, and had already formed a scheme to marry money. He thought—perhaps he was right—that ninety-nine women out of every hundred are absolute fools, and that by a discreet advertisement in the public prints he might have his choice of many desirable ladies with property—as, indeed, it turned out. What, then, of Maria? Oh, thought the hardened young libertine, Maria must be got rid of! But how? Corder did not answer that question, even to himself. He was out walking, with his gun over his shoulder and his setter at his heels. But how? he asked himself again. He did not reply, but clasped his gun with a still firmer grip, and, standing on a hillock, glanced below him at a certain Red Barn distant some quarter of a mile, remote, sinister, forbidding, solitary, from where he rested. Who knows what he thought of then? But his thick lips parted in a grim smile; he shook his head, whistled to his dog, and walked quickly down the slope, away from the Red Barn, turning to the right, avoiding the village alehouse, and thus reaching Mr. Martin's cottage. Whatever they implied of good or evil, whatever their fulfilment might mean to Maria and himself, his plans were formed. A scheme had taken root in his rather fertile brain; for Corder was no fool, though a rustic, and ruthless, cunning, and persistent. "I don't marry you," he muttered, "my good Maria; I marry money!" He did—and got hanged for his pains!

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On May 18, 1827, Corder called at the cottage of old Martin, expressed his complete willingness that the long-deferred ceremony should be performed, and added that, to save time, and to keep the marriage as private as possible, he had made up his mind to have it celebrated by licence. The next day was appointed for the wedding, and he persuaded the young woman to attire herself in a suit of his clothes, so as to secure the greatest secrecy, and to accompany him to a part of his premises called the Red Barn, where she could exchange them for her own, and from whence he would convey her in a gig, which he had in readiness, to a church at Ipswich. She having consented to this singular proposition and seemingly purposeless deceit, Corder quitted the cottage, and was soon after followed by his intended victim, who carried with her the clothes in which she expected to appear at church. In the course of a conversation between Corder and the girl's mother before going away, he repeatedly declared his intention to make the girl his wife, and he urged as a reason why the wedding should take place at once that he knew that a warrant had been issued against her on account of her illegitimate children. It may be stated here that no such warrant had ever been spoken of or contemplated.

At this stage a brief description must be given of the edifice known as the Red Barn. This was a rather capacious but somewhat dilapidated building, which had once been used to shelter cattle in large numbers, but was now given to such purposes as the storing of corn and fodder, etc., etc. It stood at the top end of a large field about three-quarters of a mile from Polestead, which field was rented by Corder's late father. That youth himself had the keys of it, and for many years after the crime it was generally believed—and there seems good ground for the suggestion—that it was the scene of the amours of Corder and of Maria Martin, as well as the subsequent murder and unhallowed burying-place of the unfortunate girl. Except for two or three dirty and dilapidated outhouses which stood near—the flotsam and jetsam of an abandoned farm—and one big shelter for cattle on the

Her daughter was quite safe and well.

right of it, the Red Barn stood remote from any other building. A rivulet ran near the road which skirted the field, and a few big trees hid the ill-omened erection from observation and regard. Never had murder more fitting

surroundings! Never was the mise-en-scène of a great crime so cunningly and appropriately chosen! The Red Barn! Why, what less than murder and sudden death could possibly happen in such a place as a Red Barn? What does the very name suggest but mystery and blood?

Within a few minutes of Corder quitting the Martin abode, he was seen by a young brother of Maria walking in the direction of the Red Barn, with a pickaxe over his shoulder; but Maria herself was never again seen alive. Nor did any word, good, bad, or indifferent, come from her again to anyone in this world, except through Corder himself, that gentleman remaining calmly at his mother's house and himself superintending some operations in the Barn by which the flooring was thickly covered with straw. The return of Maria Martin had been expected by her parents in a day or two; but as she had, on former visits to Corder, been absent for uncertain periods, little anxiety was felt at the absence of tidings and her non-appearance, more especially as he had remarked that he should obtain a temporary lodging for her. A fortnight, however, having elapsed, Mrs. Martin began to question Corder, who assured her that her daughter was quite safe and well, but that he had placed her at some distance lest his friends should discover the fact of his marriage, of which, as the Martins well knew, they would not approve. In this way, from time to time, he skilfully evaded all inquiries. Nevertheless, the tension and anxiety was beginnng to tell upon his robust health, and at last he determined to leave the neighbourhood. He represented himself as being really ill, and stated that he had been advised to seek an immediate change of air. "I shall make for the Continent," he told his cronies. "This Suffolk air entirely disagrees with me now"—which no doubt was true—"and I shall trust to time and change to make me my own man again." He then made arrangements, which he himself saw carried out, that the Red Barn should be amply stored. He took with him about £400 and the several letters which were transmitted by him to his mother, as well as those which he sent to the Martins, were dated from the Isle of Wight, in which place he informed the latter that their daughter was living with him. It was noted, however, that these missives, though so dated, always bore the London postmark; and as no communication was received from Maria herself—Corder made heroic efforts to explain her silence!—the Martins, who had already had strong suspicions regarding their daughter's safety, became extremely uneasy and dissatisfied. For hours at a time they would sit and talk, speculating on the reasons for Maria's continued reticence, and, unable to credit the plausible yet insincere explanations of their supposed son-in-law, they invariably came back to the position from which they started: What had happened to the frail girl, whom, with all her faults, they loved so well?

The circumstances which eventually led to the discovery of the atrocity are of so marvellous and unprecedented a character, as almost to manifest a special interposition of Providence in bringing to light the crime and the criminal. The facts would hardly be credible if we did not know them to be true. The whole frightful truth was revealed by means of a dream. Is it irreverent and unbecoming to see in such a vision the hand of God, pointing, with accusing finger, to the murderer and indicating in no uncertain way the grave of the victim?

HORROR-STRICKEN, HE STAGGERED FROM THE SPOT.

In the month of March of the following year (1828) Mrs. Martin dreamed on three successive nights that her daughter had been murdered and buried in the Red Barn. Terrified at the threefold repetition of this dreadful vision, an undefined suspicion took full possession of her mind. So convinced did she become of the absolute truth of the manifestation that on Saturday, April 19, she applied for permission to her husband to examine or have examined the Red Barn. That worthy obtained leave from Mrs. Corder, who little knew that she had there and then sealed the fate of her errant son. The grain which had been there deposited had by this time been removed, and old Martin, permission being given, proceeded in his search. He applied himself vigorously to the spot pointed out to

his wife, as she stated, in her dream, and then he speedily turned up a piece of the shawl which he knew his daughter had with her when she quitted home. Prosecuting his search, and now filled with the darkest forebodings, he found at the depth of eighteen inches part of a human body. Horror-stricken, he staggered from the spot; but on subsequently renewing his painful labours, he felt convinced that his wife's surmises were well-founded, and that the remains which he had thus discovered were indeed those of his long-lost child. The body was in an advanced stage of decomposition, but the dress and some peculiarities in the teeth afforded more than sufficient proofs of its identity.

Extraordinary excitement prevailed in the neighbourhood when, as speedily happened, the news of this sensational discovery was noised abroad. Crowds came from all parts of that and the adjacent counties to view the scene of the crime, to speculate upon the motives for the murder, and to learn all the particulars they could of William Corder, who had been, of course, at once suspected. The remains underwent a surgical examination by Mr. John Landen, who proved to the jury assembled to investigate the circumstances that there were sufficient appearances yet remaining to indicate that the deceased had met with a violent death. He said that there were still visible signs of blood on the face and clothes, and also in a handkerchief round the neck of the deceased; that this last appeared to have been tied extremely tight, and beneath the folds a wound was visible in the throat, evidently inflicted by some sharp instrument. There was also a wound in the orbit of the right eye, and it seemed as if something had been thrust in which had fractured the skull-bone and penetrated the brain. The body, when found, was partly enveloped in a sack, and had on a shift, flannel petticoat, stays, stockings, and shoes. The Martins told their story as to the visit of Maria to the Red Barn on the last occasion of her being seen alive, and produced the letters from Corder, which described the girl whose mutilated body had just been found as alive and well in the Isle of Wight. As may be surmised, all eyes were at once directed to Corder as the murderer; and information having been despatched to London, Lea, a very active and intelligent police-officer of the period, commenced his pursuit. The fact of the discovery at Polestead was not reported in the London prints for some days after the event, which was fortunate for the interests of justice, as Corder had plenty of money, means of disguise, etc., etc., and might, if the knowledge had come to him, have easily got clear away.

However, not suspecting that Nemesis was on his track, and that all was lost, Corder was living in fancied security and in all outward serenity near London. As it afterwards transpired, he had married a most respectable female, with whom he had become acquainted by means of advertising in the newspapers. Revolting as this mode of procuring a matrimonial alliance may seem to the delicate and the refined, it is nevertheless a fact that his advertisement procured hundreds of answers, a vast portion of which remained unopened in the hands of a respectable stationer, in the City of London, who had been induced to receive them, long after Corder had made his selection in favour of the lady who, so unhappily for herself, had blended her fortunes with his. She appears, in spite of the rather sordid method of making his acquaintance, to have fallen deeply in love with our rubicund young farmer, who was, as already related, specious and plausible, and quite capable of blinding a simple-minded woman to his real motive.

Lea, the officer, traced Corder from place to place, and at length learned that he resided at Grove House, Ealing Lane, near Brentford, where, in conjunction with his wife, he was carrying on a school for young ladies. This establishment was conducted on rather a large scale, and consisted of several governesses, besides the principal. It had been left to Mrs. Corder to carry on by her parents, and she and the murderer had been married for some four months when the Polestead revelations startled the whole countryside.

"I HAVE A SERIOUS CHARGE AGAINST YOU!"

It was necessary to employ some degree of stratagem to obtain admission to the house, and Lea, on presenting himself, stated that he had a daughter whom he wished to place in the school. He was invited into the handsomely-furnished parlour, and there found the object of his search at breakfast with four ladies. Corder looked well, hearty, and stout. He was in his dressing-gown, and had his watch in his hand as he stood timing the boiling of some eggs. Lea called him aside out of the hearing of the ladies, and the following brief conversation ensued at that stage:

Lea: "I have a serious charge against you."

Corder: "Indeed—indeed? I can think of none."

Lea: "Are you not acquainted, or were you not, with Maria Martin, of Polestead, Suffolk?"

Corder: "I can assure you I am not. I have never heard of that person, whoever she may be, even by name."

Lea: "She has been found buried in the Red Barn there, and has been murdered. You must consider yourself charged with the deed and in custody."

Corder: "I don't understand, and will reserve all I have to say. My wife is not strong. I beg you not to disturb the ladies."

He was then secured; but Mrs. Corder was permitted to think that the charge against him, though sufficiently serious, was not murder, but one of bigamy. Lea and another officer then proceeded to search the house, when a brace of pistols, a powder-flask, and some balls were found in a velvet bag, which was afterwards identified as having been in the possession of Maria Martin when she last quitted home. A sharp-pointed dagger was also found, and this was identified by a person named Offord, a cutler, as one which he had ground for the prisoner a few days before the murder. Corder was conducted to Polestead to undergo an examination before the coroner, and the utmost anxiety was evinced by the vast crowds assembled to catch a glimpse of him. During the journey from town and subsequent to his arrival at his old home, he exhibited the utmost agitation, and sought to avoid the public eye as much as was possible. He made no allusion to the crime with which he was charged, and refused in faltering tones to reply to any questions except on the most indifferent subjects.

The circumstances which we have described having been deposed to by various witnesses, a verdict of "Wilful murder against William Corder" was the inevitable result. The prisoner was thereupon committed to the county gaol to await his trial, but he had hardly been lodged within its walls before a new charge, that of forgery upon the Manningtree Bank, was laid against him. Thanks, however, to the intervention of his friends, this was eventually compromised. His wife was now, of course, aware of the real nature of the terrible charge preferred against him, but, with true womanly devotion, she refused to credit his guilt, and devoted all her energies to his defence. Previous to his trial, she visited him nearly every day, and evinced the utmost fortitude and constancy, for which even he, villain as he undoubtedly was, appeared to be proportionately grateful. She continued to the last to declare her belief that the statements in the papers were untrue, and that he would eventually be released by a jury of his countrymen from the charges and calumnies made against him. The Press of the period, less careful and discreet than now, wrote of him as guilty from the first, and published many facts concerning him which might have been prejudicial to a fair trial. Of these he bitterly complained while awaiting his trial, an ordeal which he appeared to regard with the greatest anxiety. He was very far from being an altogether hardened criminal, cruel as the deed was of which he had been guilty; and it is probable that he suffered a good deal from shame and remorse. Unable to explain away the circumstances which told most against him, even when his defence was being prepared, he took refuge in a kind of despairing silence which might have enlightened his advisers and warned them that he would probably make a confession. A stupid, remorseless, brazen ruffian might have ignored the weight of facts and concocted some wildly improbable story for the jury to believe if they chose. Not so Corder, who seemed to recognise that his fate was sealed as soon as he learnt of the discovery of the body. In prison he ate and drank well, but his nights were restless and disturbed, and he often groaned aloud in his sleep. He liked to chat to the gaolers, with whom he was remarkably popular, like "Jack" Thurtell, in spite of his crime, but he studiously avoided, prior to his conviction, any and every reference to the murder.

In the meanwhile, the scenes that took place at Polestead almost baffle description. Vast crowds from all parts of the country within one hundred miles, paid a visit of pilgrimage to the scene of this sensational crime, and the village alehouses—I am told there were three then—did such a trade as nothing but a great murder could possibly have brought. Carriages, coaches, curricles, carts, caravans, all brought visitors to what was at that time the show-place of England, and the country roads were often blocked with traffic for hours at a time. Mother Martin could, had she so desired it, have made many and many a golden guinea if she had cared to recount, first-hand, the particulars of her fateful vision, which seems to have struck the popular imagination in an astonishing way. By the way, an engraving of the Red Barn appeared in one of the very first numbers of the "Illustrated London News," although that fine old weekly did not appear for some years—about fourteen, I think—after the Polestead murder. The Barn was demolished, though, about that period, hence the picture of this interesting memento of an atrocious crime.

Catnach, the publisher of "Last Dying Speeches and Confessions," embellished with horrible portraits of the murderers, and some more or less edifying verses not always appropriate to the occasion, did "a roaring trade" out of William Corder. Some quarter of a million of those "murder sheets" were printed in the first rush after the Red Barn discovery, and went off like hot cakes, the public, who, then as now, loves a big crime, clamouring for more. The case formed the foundation for many plays, and even to this day "Maria Martin" is a standing dish at the booths and portables, and has been played in more pretentious theatres. It was generally worked in conjunction with a ghost illusion, and was toured for many years by Mr. Lionel Ellis, the well-known provincial manager, brother-in-law to the better-known Mr. Montagu Turner, who wrote "The King's Guest," as well as some successful plays.

In my next I shall describe the trial, confession, and execution of William Corder, with interesting details which have not before been published.

From the Monument.

A VERY strange case of felo-de-se happened in London in January, 1810. Mr. Lyon Levy, a very well-known Jew dealer in diamonds, went to the top of the Monument and threw himself to the ground beneath, being instantaneously killed.

He appeared perfectly sane and quite his usual self when he left his office that morning; his financial affairs were prospering exceedingly, and he was about to be married. There was absolutely no motive for the suicide, and the affair has remained a mystery ever since.

Starting a Sunday School.

A THIEF was once charged with having stolen eight bibles, valued at twenty-two and sixpence, and, after hearing the evidence, the magistrate decided to send the case for trial, as there were other offences alleged against the prisoner. A barrister, however, was engaged to defend the accused, and the learned gentleman went to his client in order to arrange a method of defence. That incorrigible was not lacking in a sense of humour.

"Oh, I admit the bibles!" he said, smiling; and then added impudently that he stole the books, "to start a Sunday school."

He received six months, though his counsel did his best for him.

Spiritualism and Swindling.

THE AUDACIOUS TRICKS PRACTISED ON ENGLISHMEN BY AN ARTFUL . . AMERICAN MEDIUM. . . . .

"But Psyche, uplifting her finger, said:—
'Sadly this star I mistrust.'"
—EDGAR ALLAN POE, "Ulalume."

IN these days of wireless telegraphy, phonographs, airships, and other marvels, we have not the same faith in the mysterious that our forefathers had; nay, we are much more sceptical than our parents were. Men with claims to the supernatural would today be required to prove definitely, even to the School Board miss, that their manifestations had nothing to do with any of the wonders of modern science—that their mysterious lights were not radium emanations, that no concealed cylinder was responsible for the heavenly voices, and that electricity had nothing whatever to do with the communications from the other world. We have grown too learned. But while we must sometimes regret that we have not the simple faith which distinguished the people of the early half of the last century, we are forced to admit that at times that faith was misleading, and the knowledge of the fact that man was easily deceived was a great temptation to the unscrupulous. Even to-day, however, spirit séances have a great attraction for many people who love to think that they are in direct communication with those who have left this material world to dwell in the filmy realms of the unmaterialised. Small wonder is it, then, that when, in the sixties of last century, certain persons suddenly announced that they had discovered means to obtain advice from those who had "passed the veil," they found a number of silly people who were only too willing to be duped. Of course, America was the home of that species of fraud, which culminated in the notorious attempt of Miss Jackson, better known to us in England as "The Swami," to manufacture spirit pictures for Mr. Luther B. Marsh, a well-known American lawyer, but England was not behindhand in a belief in mediums and their powers, and American charlatans found it well worth their while to come to the "Old Country" for a season, and then to return to their own shores with their pockets well lined.

The first really important spiritualists to flourish in Great Britain were the Davenport Brothers, who claimed a great measure of spiritual favour, and who really did some excellent tricks, as far as the times went. Their success was enormous, halls throughout the country being packed with their dupes. Their career will be told in another number.

After the Davenports had retired from practising their mystical profession in England for a term the country quieted down a little, and those who dealt in "spooks" were rather at a discount. Then there appeared on the scene a wondrous magician, whose name was quickly in everybody's mouth. He disdained to have anything to do with the common herd, and only dealt with those who were willing to pay in gold for the inestimable privilege of a few moments' communication with the unseen world. This learned savant was known in London as "Dr." Slade.

The early portion of the wizard's career is very commonplace. He was an American—that goes without saying—and at one time kept a quack doctor's shop in the States, paying a small tax which was then necessary from those who had not qualification to kill or cure. The more he succeeded as a quack the more he became convinced that mankind is easily gulled, that it loves to indulge its own credulity, and he saw an opening for turning this human trait to good account. Gradually the "surgery" assumed a more prosperous form; soft couches replaced the common benches in the waiting-room, a page ushered in the patients, who came in their numbers, while the dispensary grew smaller daily. It was clear that "Dr." Slade was prospering. Had he become a self-styled consultant physician? No. What, then, was the reason for his doing away with his drugs? Simply that he found it cheaper to rely on the imagination of his patients, which cost him nothing, than to dole out doses of medicaments which cost something. In other words, he had changed from an ordinary quack to what he termed a "clairvoyant physician."

The Americans believed in him because they did not understand what it was that he professed to do, and carriages rolled up to his door at regular intervals throughout the day. The great game of "humbug" as played by "Dr." Slade was excessively profitable.

It was while he was at the zenith of his fame as a "clairvoyant physician" that he fell in with a Mr. Simmons, a gentleman with a keen eye to the main chance. Mr. Simmons had been a merchant, a general business man, a speculator, a—well, in fact, the usual list of callings adopted by the monetary free-lance, and just at that moment he was rather on his beam-ends, and anxious to find a profitable enterprise on which to embark, the principal necessity being that it should not require too much capital. He watched Slade for a day or two, and then it struck him that there was a lot of money to be made in England by trading on the folly of the rich. He knew a little about the Davenports, so he thought that a genuine spiritualist "studio" was about the best and most paying game imaginable. He spotted at once that "Dr." Slade was the very man for the rôle of magician. He was tall, of a striking appearance, with great masses of stiff, curly black hair, which stood up from his forehead like a mop. His moustache was silky and sweeping, and would certainly attract the ladies; his knowledge of the frailties of mankind was unique, and he had the presence to carry off any swindle with great éclat. In fact, he was made for the part of a poseur, and could be trusted not to leave a stone unturned to be a success.

Simmons approached Slade, proposing that they should join their forces and come over to England. To this the "doctor" agreed, but proposed that they should first rehearse their parts in the States, where he had a following already among those who believed in the clairvoyant spoof, and who would readily swallow his professions of direct dealings with the other world. Simmons was perfectly willing, and for a short while the pair imposed upon the simple folk who were ready to trust implicitly in anything that the "dear doctor" said. He certainly was "dear," for he charged four dollars per consultation in America. Then the time came when it was advisable for Slade and Simmons to cross the Atlantic, and they came to London, arriving about the commencement of July, 1876.

The rôle of manager was entrusted to Simmons, who occupied himself in making the necessary inquiries and in seeing to the money part of the business, which so learned and spiritual a man as the "doctor" could not be degraded by considering. As manager, then, Simmons took No. 8, Bedford Place, Russell Square, and established himself there with his partner. One or two private séances sufficed for Slade's name to be well spread about, and soon clients flocked to his consulting-room to learn what messages their departed relatives had for them.

London was rather dull at the time, and we may be sure that the wealthy ladies who were gulled by the clever magician spared no pains to get more customers for him. In a couple of months Slade and Simmons were thriving, and their fame had spread all over this island. Each victim went away feeling certain that he or she (for both sexes were imposed upon equally) had been in contact with a marvellous man, and with one who was able to interpret the wishes of the spirits of their dear ones. In one sense they were right; Slade was truly a marvellous man, for his audacity was colossal.

Then the wondrous doings of the "dear doctor"—he had become dearer in England, charging a guinea a visit—attracted the attention of the scientists, and notably of one, E. Ray Lankester—one of those men who want to know. The gentleman was a very distinguished person indeed, being a Fellow of Exeter College, Oxford, and Professor of Zoology

Life of Charles Peace.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

VERY soon after the events had taken place which have been described in our last chapter, Peace, much to his astonishment, had a rencontre with a person who was perhaps the very last in the world he would have expected to meet.

He had to take some work home to a customer who resided at about a mile-and-a-half's distance from his workshop. One fine, bright sunshiny afternoon he bent his steps in the direction of the habitation in question.

As he was proceeding along a by-road he discovered in the distance a miserably-clad, cadaverous-looking man, whose features he remembered to have seen before, although they were, to say the truth, strangely and sadly altered.

At first he was in some doubt as to the identity of the traveller, but as he approached nearer he was surprised in no small degree to find that the miserable-looking man was none other than John Bristow, whom the reader will remember as Peace's fellow-lodger in the town of Bradford.

Peace was fairly taken aback when he recognised Bristow; he would, if it had been possible, have avoided a meeting, but as this could not very well be compassed, he determined to put the best face on the matter.

What could have brought Bristow to this part of the country? was his first thought. Was he in search of anybody? Had he any communication to make? These were questions he could not answer satisfactorily.

Bristow was in a most miserable plight; his clothes were ragged and torn, and hung upon his attenuated frame like those of a scarecrow; he looked the very personification of squalid misery. Peace never remembered to have seen such a sudden alteration in anyone.

"Is this the right road to Saltwich?" said Bristow, addressing Peace, whom he evidently did not at first recognise.

"You'll have to turn round to the right when you reach the finger-post at the end," returned Peace.

The man started

"Good luck to you, mate!" he ejaculated. "Why, hang it all, if it isn't Charles Peace!"

"You are right, and pray, in the name of all that's wonderful, what brings you to this part of the world, John Bristow?" inquired our hero.

"One place is the same as another to me now," returned his companion. "It matters little where I go or what I do. Everything goes wrong with me—has been going wrong ever since I last saw you. It appears likely to go wrong for the remainder of my life."

"Why, mercy on me! you are so strangely altered," said Peace, "that positively I hardly knew you. What has brought you to this? You look twenty years older."

"Do I?" he exclaimed, with one of the jerks or nods which were habitual to him. "Do I? Well, I suppose I do. Anyway, I feel more than twenty years older. I've had a bad time of it—have been in the infirmary—and am next door to starving, that's how I am."

"And have you left the old shop?"

"Left it? Lord love 'ye, long—long ago! Haven't had any regular employment for ever so long. They gave me the sack soon after you left Bradford. I get a job when I can, and that's not very often. I'm on the tramp now to see and find something to do, and haven't a blessed mag about me."

"All this is very sad. And your wife?"

"My wife? She took her hook without giving me an hour's warning."

"Where is she?"

"Umph! I should like to know, but I never shall now, I suppose. Oh, she's turned me up. You see, we had a bit of a quarrel, and——"

"You were always having quarrels when I knew you, but whose fault was it—not hers?"

"That's true enough—it was mine. Well, I bear her no ill-will. I hope she's happier now. But, look here, Charlie, we had some words. I'm sorry for what I said. You don't bear malice, I suppose—there's my hand."

"Let bygones be bygones," said Peace. "You've been your own enemy more than anyone else's. I'm sorry to see you so down, but——"

"I know what you are going to say—it is my own fault. Well, if it is, I am the sufferer; but, I say, do you happen to have a trifle you can spare an old chum? Something to help me on my road? I hope to get a job at Saltwich, and, if I do, I will return you what you may be able to lend—upon my soul, I will, and no gammon."

"I am a struggling man myself, but still I'll do something—here's ten shillings. When you have the means to pay it me back, do so."

"You're a right down good fellow, Charlie!" exclaimed Bristow, in evident delight, "and I'm sorry I said what I did, but you know well enough that I didn't mean it."

"That will do—enough upon that head. Pull yourself together, and keep away from that cursed drink; it is that alone which has made you the wreck you are."

"Ah! I am a wreck—you are right enough! I am a wreck, that is true enough. I'm not the Jack Bristow you knew some three or four years ago."

"And what about Bessie?" said Peace. "What of her? She left her old quarters about——"

"About the same time as the missus. Ah! they both took their hook at the same time. I don't think the old woman would have had the heart to go by herself. I'll never be brought to believe that She wouldn't ha' gone had it not a' been for Bessie."

"And have you no idea where they went?"

"Said they were going abroad, that's all I know. Gone to America, Australia, or some such place. But, lord, I've given over thinking about 'em. What's the use?"

"I don't know that it is of much use, but I cannot understand the reason for so sudden a flight."

"Oh, there's good reason, for the matter of that, leastways as far as my old woman is concerned. I don't believe she has ever cared a great deal about me, and that's the honest truth. Well, latterly, you see, she got fairly sick of me."

"You have nobody but yourself to blame for that."

"So you always told me. Well, one thing is quite clear, I can't afford to keep a wife now—can't keep myself."

"You ought to be able to do so with common prudence. You are a skilful workman, and, with ordinary care and attention, might earn a respectable livelihood."

"At it again!" exclaimed Bristow, with a coarse laugh. "The same old game—moralising. What man was ever made sober by preaching, I should like to know?"

"And do you never intend to reform?"

"Me? Ha! ha! I'm afraid I'm too far gone for that."

"Then I should be ashamed to acknowledge it, if I were you—that's all I have to say about the matter, Bristow; you are positively incorrigible."

"You're a good fellow, Charlie, but hang your preaching. I never could stand that; but, there, I don't mean to offend you."

"Oh, you don't offend me. What I say is for your own good. It is no business of mine, you may answer. Perhaps not; but, nevertheless, it is my duty to offer you some advice, however unpalatable it may be."

"You ought to have been a parson, Charlie, upon my word, you ought. You'd ha' made your fortune in the preaching line."

"Well, say no more upon the subject. I have business to attend to, and so we must part."

"Where am I to send to you? Where do you hang out now?"

"I am constantly on the move, am travelling, but if you want to communicate with me, address a letter to the post-office, Sheffield, and it will be sure to reach me."

"You're a good fellow. There's no house near where we

can have a parting glass? Just one, you know, to show there's no animosity."

"There is no house near, and so think of what I have said, and farewell till we meet again."

"Good-bye, Peace, and good luck attend you," said Bristow, shaking his companion by the hand, and so the two parted.

Peace proceeded with his picture frames towards the house of his customer, and John Bristow went in the opposite direction.

"Strange, remarkably strange, my meeting with that man!" he murmured, as he walked along. "And so he knows no more about his wife and Bessie than I do myself. It is altogether most mysterious and incomprehensible, but there's something in the background which has not yet come to light."

After delivering his frames he returned to his workshop, where he was occupied for an hour or two. He then sought the hospitable parlour of the Carved Lion.

On the following morning, while he was at breakfast in the club-room, Brickett came in and said with much concern:

"This is a sad business at Saltwich."

"What is that?" inquired Peace, looking up from his smoking and fragrant cup of coffee.

"Ah! of course—I forgot you haven't heard."

"No. What is it?"

"A poor fellow has been found in the road in a dying condition."

"Who is he?"

"No one seems to know. He is a stranger to these parts and is supposed to be a tramp."

"Indeed!—is he in any way injured?"

"Most seriously, they say—skull's fractured. They have taken him to the workhouse."

"Is nothing known about him?"

"Well, it appears that he had been drinking heavily for some hours, and the last house he called at the landlord refused to serve him. He became so violent that he had to be ejected. After that he offered to fight everybody; at length he was persuaded to go away. The last time he was seen alive was in Bedhall's Lane; and at the end of this, near the high road, he was found in a dying condition."

"Dear me, how very terrible! Has he been subjected to violence? Has anyone attacked him?"

"They seem to say not. When last seen he was running like mad. The supposition is that he stumbled and fell, his head striking against a heap of stones near to where he was found."

Peace began to be seriously concerned.

"What sort of a man was he?" he inquired.

"I don't know, but there's a carter outside who saw him."

Peace rose at once and proceeded to the front entrance of the house

A man was giving his horses some hay and water in front of the hostelry.

"Here, Jem," said Brickett, "tell the gentleman what kind of man it was who was found on the Saltwich road in a dying condition."

The carter scratched his head and remarked:

"What sort o' man? Well, un seemed a tallish chap, looked like a tramp."

"Pale or dark?"

"Dunno. Ye see, his face were smothured in blood, so un couldn't say."

"Had he dark bushy whiskers?"

"Yes, sticking out on the side on his cheeks."

"Had he on a ragged fustian coat and moleskin trousers, much the worse for wear?"

"Yes, un 'ad."

"And short cropped dark hair?"

"His hair was a bit short."

"Ah! thank you. Will you have a mug of ale?"

"Ay, thank 'ee, zur, I will."

The ale was drawn and drunk with evident relish by the carter, who was apparently not much discomposed by the sight he had witnessed some hour or two before.

Peace returned to the club-room. He was followed by Brickett.

"Well," said the latter, "how about the description? Do 'ee know aught about the stranger?"

"I am afraid I do," returned Peace, who then proceeded to make his companion acquainted with his rencontre with Bristow.

"And it is just possible," he said, in conclusion, "that the miserable besotted wretch spent the money I gave him in drink. I say it is possible—nay, more, it is most probable."

"If I were you I'd just run over to Saltwich and see if it be he—that is, if you can spare the time."

In less than half an hour after this Charles Peace rang the porter's bell at the workhouse.

He was conducted by the master into a small apartment. An iron bedstead was in this, on the mattress of which was stretched the dead body of a man.

One glance sufficed.

It was the last mortal remains of John Bristow.

The whole affair had been so sudden, the dénouement to the tragedy so swift, or it might be said electric, that Peace stood appalled.

"You know him, then?" said the master of the workhouse.

"I did know him years ago, but never dreamed it would end thus."

"There will be an inquest," said the workhouse official.

Peace nodded.

"If my attendance is required you know where to find me—at the Carved Lion."

And with these words he left the chamber of death.

An inquest was held on the body, and the conclusion arrived at was that the unfortunate man had stumbled, and fallen head foremost on a heap of granite. Blood was found on one of the pieces of granite.

He had evidently afterwards crawled to the end of the lane, where it was assumd that he had sunk from exhaustion and loss of blood. He must have remained in a helpless condition for some hours.

Death resulted from injuries to the head and exposure, joined to a shattered constitution, the effects of drinking to excess.

The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death."

Unhappily for society, John Bristow's is not a solitary case of the but too frequent indulgence in this fatal propensity.

The increase of intemperance in this country in the present day is an inexhaustible theme for moralists, economists, and philanthropists.

Drunkenness is the parent of crime, of pauperism, and of misery and degeneracy. It is not possible to calculate the evils that ensue from the pernicious and demoralising effects of a maddening propensity for drink.

The wretched and careworn doubtless fly to it as their only solace. For a time their spirits are raised, but a reaction soon takes place, and at any cost they must procure more stimulants. The end of this may be readily imagined.

How to deal with this gigantic national vice, on which, as yet, no impression has been made, is a question not so easily answered.

If there is one thing more certain than another, it is that, as wealth outstrips culture, sensuality outstrips refinement.

The illiterate millionaire who feasts his guests on turtle and champagne is about the counterpart of the ignorant artisan, who, out of his week's earnings, treats a less fortunate comrade to a bottle of whiskey or gin.

England for many a day has been brought up in the worship of Mammon and Bacchus, and we are afraid, despite the efforts of the Legislature, intemperance is a vice which we must lay to our account for many years to come.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Let us return to the halls of the rich and great. In the library at Broxbridge are seated two venerable-looking gentlemen; the first of these is Lord Ethalwood, his companion being the white-haired old vicar. They are both students, only in different ways. The rev. father in God, Canon Lenthal, was a special favourite with the master of Broxbridge.

"But you will pardon me, my lord," he observed, in his soft, mellifluous voice. "The time, I think, has arrived when it is your bounden duty to look to the future. I have no desire to allude to painful subjects, but I really think your worldly affairs should not be forgotten."

"My children are dead, sir," returned the earl—"have been dead for very many years—and every hope of my life has been destroyed. I bow to the decrees of Fate; but the last thing an Ethalwood lays down is what the world is pleased to term his pride."

"My dear and very excellent friend," said the vicar, "that may be true enough—without doubt it is absolutely true in every sense of the word; but, nevertheless, that is no reason for you not turning your eyes towards the future, which is to one and all of us inevitable. Look around you and consider who is to succeed you—who is to carry on the glories and the honours of your grand old race?"

"I have no next of kin save a headstrong, wild, dissipated nephew, who is unworthy of a place of honour—unworthy to represent the ancient and honoured line of the Ethalwoods."

"The more reason, then, is there for you making an effort while there is yet time."

"Make an effort!" exclaimed the earl. "Can I restore the dead to life?" he added, with supreme bitterness. "Can I call back the loved ones who have passed away?"

"Assuredly not."

"Then what do you mean by an effort?"

"My dear Lord Ethalwood, I have no desire to offend you, but assuredly you can be at no loss to divine my meaning?"

There was a pause. The nobleman made no reply. Like Othello, he gnawed his nether lip, and looked persistently at a large silver salver that blazed on the sideboard beneath the rays of the midday sun, which found their way through the oriel window of the apartment.

The vicar felt that he was treading upon forbidden ground. He, however, determined upon proceeding.

"I think you have not duly considered the matter, Lord Ethalwood," he observed, in the same quiet, tender way. "Nay, I am sure you cannot have done so. You have a daughter."

"I have no daughter—she died years ago."

"Died?"

"She has been dead to me—dead—for full five-and-twenty years."

"True, she may be dead. But, even assuming this were the case—assuming it for argument's sake——"

"Well, what then? We will assume it for argument's sake."

"She may have left children—may have left a son and heir to the title and estates. You have said that her offence was an unpardonable one."

"So it was. No living man will dare to dispute the point with me."

"Do not be so choleric, my very dear old friend. I grant what you say. Her offence is perhaps unpardonable, but that is no reason for the innocent being similarly punished. You really must allow me to be plain-spoken when a subject of this nature——"

"You are plain-spoken," exclaimed Lord Ethalwood, as his pale face became still paler, "very plain-spoken."

He arose from his chair and walked with rapid strides up and down the room.

"You are moved," said Canon Lenthal. "The subject is a painful one, without doubt, but it may appear like egotism on my part when I express a hope that you might possibly be induced to listen to me more complacently than you would to any other. Now, sit down, my lord, and view the matter in a better and more becoming spirit."

Lord Ethalwood made no reply, but again took his seat at the table in front of the vicar.

"How could I," he muttered, "bring the child or children of that base, low-born Italian within the walls of Broxbridge?"

"They are his children, no one will for a moment deny, that is, assuming there are any. Should there be issue of his marriage with your daughter they belong to your race—they may even resemble you in features, and in disposition also."

"I hope not."

"Do not say that, my dear friend—let us hope they do. They may even have the grand old Ethalwood spirit, the force, the nobility, and honour of the race from which they descend in a direct line. In a direct line, mark you—you cannot deny that."

"I do not seek to deny it."

"Very well, they have a greater right to succeed to the title and estates than any other living person. You may be proud, but that is no reason why you should not be just and reasonable, and I maintain that it would not be right to pass over your lineal descendants. After all, there is something in a rightful claim which the best and worst of mankind generally acknowledge. It would be manifestly unjust to set it aside."

"Really, my esteemed and reverend sir, I must tell you plainly that your argument is based upon no foundation whatever; you are jumping at a conclusion. My undutiful daughter may have no children."

"That I admit. She may not. I am only suggesting that some effort should be made to find her. She may be dead—life is, at best, held on but a frail and uncertain tenure—but that is no reason for your remaining persistently in the dark."

"Ah! so many years have elapsed that the task would not be likely to turn out satisfactory in any way, even if I were disposed to consent."

"But you will give your consent. Let me prevail upon you to do so," observed the good old vicar. "Some effort must be made to find out whether your daughter is alive or dead—that is the first thing to be done."

"We have not the faintest clue. Five-and-twenty years have passed over. You seem to forget that."

"No, indeed, I do not. I have thought over this matter more often than you can possibly imagine, for I must tell you it is a subject which has troubled me much for years past. I have abstained from naming it from feelings of delicacy, as I felt that I had no right to interfere between father and child; but it has occupied my mind very much, nevertheless, and it has, moreover, caused me the deepest anxiety."

"Pray say no more. Accept my best thanks for your kindness and consideration. I will think the subject over, and then determine upon my course of action."

"No time like the present."

"You are very persistent," observed the earl, with a smile—it was the first that had irradiated his features for many a day.

His companion looked upon it as a good omen.

"I have one or two calls to make at the other end of the village, and, upon my return, will call in again," said the vicar. "Think over what I have said. In less than an hour I will see you again."

"Good. I shall look for you, then, at the expiration of that time."

The rumbling of the wheels of the vicar's chariot was heard on the hard, dry road, and Lord Ethalwood was alone once more.

He did think the matter over after the departure of Canon Lenthal, and his heart softened.

"He is right—oh, he is quite right! I am childless—have no kith or kin that I know of. I must and will take active measures, and see if she be still alive."

He sat down at the table and buried his face in his hands.

The hour sped by, and the vicar returned, agreeable to his promise.

"I have taken your advice, and have thought the matter seriously over," said Lord Ethalwood.

"And what is your ultimatum?" inquired Canon Lenthal.

"To institute inquiries without further delay."

The two friends sat down once more, and began to discuss details in a serious and business-like manner.

To the great surprise of the vicar, he learnt from Lord Ethalwood that he had never heard a word of his daughter after she left Broxbridge.

"Most singular," murmured the good pastor. "But did she never write to you?"

"I believe so, but all the letters have been destroyed."

"Where were they addressed from?"

"I don't know. I never saw them. I gave orders to my butler to destroy them. Oh, we shall never be able to learn anything of that, I am convinced. Nevertheless, I will endeavour to do so."

"How will you proceed?"

"Place the matter in the hands of my lawyer—he will know how to act."

"I am most delighted to find that you have listened to my advice, and hope and trust that you may be successful," exclaimed the vicar. "In a few days' time I hope to hear good news. Farewell, my friend, and that your efforts may be crowned with success will be the earnest prayer of your old friend."

The two shook hands, and Canon Lenthal left Broxbridge in much better spirits than when he entered.

Mr. Chicknell, the earl's lawyer, who had been telegraphed for, arrived about noon on the following day.

He was at once shown into the library. Lord Ethalwood had by this time become excited and restless. He explained the whole business to his legal adviser.

"Oh," observed the latter, when his client had concluded. "You now desire to find her out?"

"If it be possible. It seems to me to be most hopeless."

"Nothing is hopeless in the hands of efficient persons," returned the man of parchment. "Leave the matter in my hands. I know a clever fellow belonging to the detective department at Scotland Yard."

"Detective department!" exclaimed the earl, in evident disgust. "Is my daughter to be traced by a man whose business it is to hunt down common thieves?"

"My lord, I pray of you not to be so hasty. Detectives are employed by all sorts of people for all sorts of purposes, and for this reason they are especially qualified to deal with

cases of this sort. They'll find out in a week probably more than I could in months."

"Well, as you please. You know best."

"I will do my best for you, rest assured of that," said Mr. Chicknell. "The very moment I obtain the least scrap of information I will either write or wire to you without delay."

The active little lawyer returned to London that very afternoon.

Weeks passed over after this. Mr. Chicknell wrote several letters, but they contained but little intelligence.

At last one came which was more cheering. The Italian professor and his wife had been traced first to London, where they had lived some months, and in all probability had spent what little ready money they had. From the metropolis the Italian had gone to Leeds, where he earned a living by teaching. He and his wife had taken lodgings in that city, and there a child was born.

From what could be gathered, it would appear that Montini found it a hard task to maintain a lady brought up in the lap of luxury, and the young couple had to submit to a number of privations.

There were persons residing in Leeds who remembered both the professor and his young English wife.

Indeed, some of the Italian's pupils, now grown up to middle-aged people, attested to the fact that Montini's wife presented her husband with a little girl, and the register of her birth and baptism was obtained in the town.

Matters, therefore, looked a little more promising, and the old earl watched for the post each day with the greatest anxiety.

From Leeds they went to Harrogate. In this place they were supposed to be struggling for some time in adverse circumstances, and while there the professor became seriously ill—so bad, indeed, that his life was despaired of.

A doctor who attended him, and who still practised in this fashionable watering-place, gave a very sorry account of the Italian's health, which, he said, was much broken while Montini was under his care. His impression at the time was that he could not live more than three or four years.

Mr. Chicknell, in his letters to the earl, informed the latter of all these facts; at the same time he expressed his sincere regret that there did not seem to be much chance of obtaining more information, as the clue seemed to be lost after the professor and his wife left Harrogate.

The supposition was that they returned to London, but this was merely surmise; there was no direct proof of them having done so.

For some time after this the matter remained in abeyance, and the anxiety of the bereaved nobleman increased as the weeks flew by.

He proceeded up to town, and waited upon Mr. Chicknell at his chambers, Paper Buildings, Temple.

"Can nothing more be done in the matter?" he inquired of the lawyer.

"I fear not, my lord. Certainly not at present," answered his legal adviser.

"Surely, Mr. Chicknell, you do not intend giving over making further inquiries? The case is a most serious one as far as I am individually concerned, and we must not let the matter rest. I do not care what expense is incurred, but you must do your best to clear up the mystery," said Lord Ethalwood.

"YOU ARE VERY PLAIN SPOKEN."

"We appear to have come to a deadlock, but that is no reason for our abandoning the search as hopeless," returned his companion. "Mr. Wrench, of Scotland Yard, has had the case in hand, and has striven as hard as any man possibly could have done to bring the matter to a satisfactory conclusion. I think the best plan will be for him to wait upon you at Broxbridge, and you can then hear what he has to say. You will find him a most intelligent officer."

"I wish you would communicate with him at once, then."

"He is not in town this week, but the moment he comes back I will convey to him your expressed wish, and he will hasten at once to Broxbridge."

"I shall be anxiously awaiting his appearance," said the earl, who took his leave, and returned to his country seat.

CHAPTER XXX.

In a few days after this a gentleman presented himself at the outer gate of Broxbridge Hall, and told the porter that he desired to see the earl upon important business.

"Show Mr. Wrench in at once," said Lord Ethalwood to Jakyl; "of course I want to see him."

The detective entered, and introduced himself to the nobleman, who desired him to be seated.

"Well, Mr. Wrench, my solicitor informs me that there is a deadlock in this business; can nothing more be done?"

"Oh, we can do a great deal more, my lord," observed Wrench; "but you must acknowledge that I am furnished with such slender material, and then there's the lapse of time, and many other things against us."

"Admitted—still you do not give up all hope."

"Well, no, I'm not accustomed to do that. I am glad we have met, my lord, for many reasons—you will, I am sure, pardon me if I am plain-spoken."

"Certainly, speak as openly and frankly as possible. I desire you to do so. Up to the present time I am free to confess we have been baffled."

"I have done all that man could do, but my efforts have not as yet been crowned with success; I expect you to give me all the information you can."

"Certainly, that is but a just and reasonable request."

"You will not be offended, therefore, if I inquire about one or two little matters? Just tell me if you have any of your daughter's letters, which she might probably have sent here after her departure?"

"I have never seen any of them," said Lord Ethalwood.

"That's most important—did anybody else?"

"I gave orders to my butler to destroy them."

"Do you think he would remember any of the postmarks?"

"I never thought of that," exclaimed the earl, with a start.

"Probably not; but it is the very first thing that occurred to me. Did any letters arrive?"

"That I cannot tell you."

"Where is your butler? Is he in your service now?"

"Dear me, yes—he has never left it."

"Will you be kind enough to summon him?"

Lord Ethalwood touched the bell. A servant entered.

"Tell Mr. Jakyl I desire to speak with him," said his master.

In a minute or so the butler entered the library.

"Will you leave it to me to put the necessary questions?" inquired the detective, addressing his lordship, who felt a mere child in comparison to the sagacious officer.

"Certainly," he answered, without hesitation.

Mr. Wrench cleared his throat, and focussed his eyes upon the smooth and placid face of the butler.

"I have one or two questions to put to you," said the detective. "In the first place, did any letters arrive here from the Hon. Miss Ethalwood after her departure from Broxbridge?"

Mr. Jakyl stood aghast—he could hardly believe that he had heard aright.

"Did any letters arrive?" he paused, and glanced nervously at his master.

"Go on. Answer, Jakyl, you have my permission."

"Yes, sir; several arrived after the departure of my young mistress, but——"

"You were told to destroy them," observed the detective. "Did you do so?"

"I would rather not answer the question," said the butler, in evident trepidation; then, turning to Lord Ethalwood, he murmured, in an undertone, "If I have done wrong, my lord, I hope you will pardon me; I did not destroy my young mistress's letters."

"A very discreet and sensible man," ejaculated Mr. Wrench. "And, pray, why did you disobey his lordship?"

"Because I hoped that at some time they might be useful."

"You have displayed great wisdom in your course of action—you cannot be too strongly commended, Mr—— I don't know your name."

"Jakyl."

"Well, Mr. Jakyl, you have acted in a very proper manner. I hope his lordship is of my opinion."

"I am," returned the earl, with undisguised pleasure. "I think Jakyl has been most prudent. To say the truth, I have always had the greatest confidence in him."

The butler bowed, and hardly knew how to comport himself under the praise which was so lavished on him.

"I must tell you frankly, Mr. Jakyl," said the detective, "that I am engaged in instituting a rigorous search for your master's daughter; so if it be in your power to give me any information which may aid me in my inquiries, it will be a boon to us all."

"I wish I could, sir."

"Well, not now. I don't mean at present, but if anything occurs to you, out with it at once."

"I will."

"Now, my friend, let me have the letters without further delay."

The butler looked again at his master.

"Fetch them at once, Jakyl. You have heard what Mr. Wrench has said. The matter is in his hands."

The servant left the library, and in a minute or so returned with a packet of papers tied with silk cord. He handed them to the earl, who pushed them towards the detective, saying, as he did so:

"I have not the courage to open them just now. You can do so."

"I will not open them," answered Mr. Wrench; "but, with your permission, will take a note of the postmarks and dates."

He sorted them, placed them on the table in chronological order, pulled out his note-book, and made entries therein. Then he closed the book, and said:

"This looks a little more promising. I have some material now to work upon. At your leisure, my lord, you can peruse the contents of the epistles, and possibly there may be something which may be of service to us in the pursuit of this inquiry."

"I will go carefully over them when I am a little more composed," observed the earl.

"Good. I shall not return to London just at present, for special reasons. I deem it expedient to remain in this neighbourhood."

"Will you take up your quarters here?"

"No, I thank you, my lord. It would be best, I think, to put up at an inn. There will be more chance of my picking up information in a place of public resort. We have our own way of doing business," observed Wrench, with a smile.

Lord Ethalwood bowed and smiled also.

The very last thing he thought of doing was to dictate to the sagacious officer, who, in affairs of this sort, was so much his superior.

"From the postmarks on the letters I see your daughter and her husband have paid a visit to several other towns besides those in which I have made inquiries."

"Other towns—eh?" exclaimed the earl.

"Yes, one is Sheffield and another Bradford. I shall make it my business to visit both places. Ah! the case is not so hopeless as Mr. Chicknell seems to imagine."

"I am glad to hear yousay so. Pray heaven we may be successful; it will remove a weight off my heart."

The detective looked at the speaker and observed quietly:

"You ought not to have let the matter go so long without ascertaining something respecting the young people's whereabouts."

"Of that you must allow me to be the best judge," said Lord Ethalwood, with all his old pride and hauteur.

Mr. Wrench saw at once the mistake he had made in hazarding an observation which sounded very much like a reproof.

"But you have a duty to perform, sir," observed the earl, "and I doubt not that you will not shrink from carrying it out to the best of your ability."

The detective bowed, and answered in the affirmative. He then rose and took his departure, promising his patron to wait upon him again in a day or two.

Mr. Wrench inquired of the butler the most convenient house in the neighbourhood for him to put up at.

Mr Jakyl, as a matter of course, recommended him to go to the Carved Lion, and he at once bent his steps in the direction of that well-known hostelry.

Lord Ethalwood had not sufficient fortitude to open his daughter's letters in the presence of anyone, more especially that one beinga detective. It was a task he had reserved for another occasion.

Soon after the departure of Mr. Wrench his lordship mustered up courage to break the seals of the epistles. As he did so, a tremor seemed to pass through his frame.

A deep sigh escaped from him as he opened the first letter. In this the letter referred to her elopement as a playful piece of diplomacy, never for a moment assuming that it would be deemed an unpardonable offence by her parent.

She asked him to forgive her, and not be angry with his pet, as she had done that which had made her happy for life.

Lord Ethalwood tossed the epistle on one side with something like contempt or disgust.

The second letter was a little more serious in tone. In it she was lavish in her praise of Montini, who, she said, was the kindest and most considerate of husbands, he was so good, so clever—in short, there was no one like him.

She besought her father to write, if only a few lines. She would not and could not believe that he intended to cast her off.

"The infatuated, senseless girl!" ejaculated the earl. "I never would have believed she could have so forgotten her position in life. For the life of me I cannot understand it."

These two communications were followed by imploring letters, in which she told him how hard the world was using them, and what miserable struggles they had passed through.

But in this as in all others she spoke in the highest terms of her husband, who, she said, did his best to maintain a respectable position in the world; this was done for her sake more than his own, "and if," she said in conclusion, "you only knew him half as well as I do, you would admire and esteem him; nay, more, I believe you would be proud of him."

"She must have taken leave of her senses," ejaculated the earl. "The wretched Italian must have bewitched her, the silly, senseless girl. Oh, but all this is hard to bear!"

He remained for some time after this lost in thought. Presently he opened another epistle.

This announced the birth of a daughter; it was, of course, a fine child, and was, so the writer avowed, "the very image of its mother, and was an Ethalwood—this everyone would acknowledge upon the first glance, and she will be named after me," wrote the ill-fated wife. "Some day I hope you will see the little dear, and when you do I hope you will forgive me for your grand-daughter's sake. She, at any rate, has not done anything to offend you."

"It all seems to be like a dream," murmured the earl, as he broke the seal of another. This came from Harrogate, and its tone was both melancholy and despairing. Montini was dangerously ill—he was not able to follow his avocation, and his unhappy wife implored her father to hold out a helping hand and send them money without delay, as they were reduced to the greatest possible extremity, and positively wanted the common necessaries of life.

Lord Ethalwood dashed the letter down on the table, smote his forehead with one hand, and uttered an expression indicative of the most poignant agony.

"I never thought it would come to this," he muttered, rising from his seat and pacing the apartment restlessly. "Poor girl! she must indeed have changed to beg for assistance! Oh, what would I give now to have her here by my side, in—in the winter of my life—in my old age!"

He fell into his chair and burst out into a passionate flood of tears. Retributive justice had overtaken the proud, uncompromising, relentless nobleman, who cried like a child.

* * * * * *

Mr. Wrench wended his way along till he reached the well-known house of entertainment for man and beast, kept by the equally well-known Brickett. The detective was not a man to make himself common by mixing up with any knot of strangers—not unless he could make it answer his purpose to do so—he therefore requested to be shown into a private room, and, after partaking of some refreshment, he proceeded to glance at the memoranda he jotted down in his notebook.

"Humph!" he murmured. "The young couple seem to have visited a good many towns; I suppose things were running cross with them. It's queer business, take it altogether, and the earl is a starchy sort of customer, as unforgiving as the devil, and as proud as a peacock. Well, I wouldn't change places with him for all his wealth and title. He's what I call a stunner. No two ways about him. But 'he's down among the dead men' this time, it would appear—is what our Transatlantic friends would call 'cornered.' I must find out all about his daughter for him, that's certain—that is, if it be possible. The question is how it is to be accomplished."

Not being able to answer this question with anything like satisfaction to himself, Mr. Wrench lighted a cigar, rang the bell, and ordered some brandy cold.

He had not indulged in many puffs at the "fragrant weed" before Brickett made his appearance.

"Oh, your pardon, sir," said the landlord; "but be your name Wrench?"

"Yes, my friend, it be."

"A servant from the hall wishes to speak with you."

"Let him come up, then."

Henry Adolphus made his appearance.

"His lordship told me to call and see if you were comfortable 'ere, as, if not, a bed will be provided for you at the hall."

"I'm all right, my man. Shall do very well here. Give my respects to his lordship, and say that I am quite comfortable. Anything else?"

"No; I b'lieve that is hall."

Henry Adolphus retired.

The sounds of music and merriment in the parlour reached the ears of the detective.

"You appear to have a merry set of people below," said he to Brickett.

"Yes, sir, they enjoy themselves in their own way."

"Somebody's playing the violin."

"Yes; it's a gentleman who's stopping here for a short time, and he generally gives my parlour customers a tune or two after working hours—after the day's work is over."

"He does not handle the instrument badly. Is he a professional?"

"Well, partly so, I believe. He is in the frame and picture line of business—a traveller."

"Oh, is that so?"

"Would you like to go downstairs into the public room?" inquired the landlord.

"Not now, I thank you—some other evening, perhaps. Did I understand you to say that this violinist and picture-frame maker was stopping here?"

"He is for the present, until his orders are completed. Why, Lord bless us, he's done wonders at the Hall, and has been highly complimented by Lord Ethalwood himself."

Brickett now put his customer in possession of all the facts relative to the restoration of the decayed portrait of his lordship's great ancestor.

"Ah! he must be a smartish sort of chap. Thank you," observed the detective, who very shortly after the foregoing conversation was conducted to his bedroom.

In the morning he was shown into the clubroom, where breakfast was served. Peace was partaking of his morning meal.

The detective bowed and sat down on the opposite side of the table. He looked at our hero with evident curiosity, but did not remember to have seen him before.

During breakfast the two conversed upon several topics, which were, however, not of a personal nature.

Peace did not know who his companion was; neither did he take the trouble to inquire. He concluded he was some commercial man who had rested there for the night, and the probability was that he should not see any more of him.

Our hero went to his workshop, and Mr. Wrench remained behind. He reflected for some little time, and then rose from his chair and went downstairs.

Brickett, as usual, was behind the bar.

"Is that the violinist and picture-dealer—the one I had breakfast with?" he inquired.

"Ay, surely that be he."

"He's a sharp customer, a downy sort of card—isn't he?" said Mr. Wrench.

"He's got his head screwed on the right way, if that's what you mean," returned the landlord, a little sharply.

"Yes, that's precisely what I do mean. Where does he hail from?"

"Hail from? I dunno."

"He's been travelling about the country, you say?"

"That 'im has—been to every mortal place, so I've heerd."

"Ah! just so. Where is he to be found now?"

"Found! He works in Dennett's Lane."

"And where is that?"

"Not a quarter of a mile from here. Why?"

"I will give him a call. What might be his name?"

"Peace—Charles Peace. Be you going to call on 'im now?"

"Yes."

"Then I'll show 'ee where his place is."

The landlord went to the door of the house, and pointed out the lane in question to his customer.

"There at the farther end of that," said he, "you will find a wooden shed, and in that you will see 'im at work."

"Thank you," said Mr. Wrench, who at once proceeded in the direction pointed out by his host.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Mr. Wrench was a man who pursued his inquiries with the greatest pertinacity; he was not accustomed to let the "grass grow under his feet."

It was a maxim of his, and one, indeed, the truth of which had been made manifest, that "you sometimes obtain the most valuable information from a source which appeared at first glance the most unlikely to be fruitful."

It occurred to him that it would be quite as well to interrogate our hero before he (the detective) proceeded to the other towns visited by the missing pair. Possibly the itinerant frame-maker might have some knowledge of the person or

persons of whom he was in search; anyway there would be no harm in putting the question to him.

"Who knows," murmured Mr. Wrench, as he took his way along the lane—"who knows but this fellow—who, it would appear, is a sort of Admirable Crichton, in his way, if one is to believe the landlord of the Lion—may not have come across someone in his various wanderings who may have been acquainted with the Italian professor, who was a musician? It is certain that, to a certain extent, the picture chap is a musician—so here goes for it."

He was by this time at the door of Peace's workshop, at which he gave a modest knock. It was opened by our hero.

"Good morning again," said the detective. "I want to have a little conversation with you; but you are busy, perhaps. Some other time will do as well."

"Oh, come in—you won't hinder me," returned Peace. "I can go on with my work, and you can have your say. Be seated."

He handed his visitor a rickety Windsor chair, which, to all appearance, had been put together in the last century.

Mr. Wrench sat down, and Peace, with his book of leaf gold in one hand and the pad in the other, went on with his work.

The detective cleared his throat, and then said carelessly:

"I understand that you have visited a number of towns—of course you naturally would do so—in the exercise of your vocation. Am I right?"

"Yes; I've been about a goodish bit."

"Oh, yes, so I hear. Well, now, I must be candid with you. I am in search of an Italian professor and his wife. The former was a teacher of music; but it is more than twenty years since anything has been heard of either."

"Twenty years!" exclaimed Peace. "It is, then, not at all likely that I should know anything about them. I was but a child at that time."

"True, but they may be alive now, you know."

"Ah! that's another matter. What might be the gentleman's name?"

"Montini."

Peace shook his head.

"Never heard of such a person," he ejaculated. "Don't know anyone of that name."

"Ah! I was afraid it would be before your time," observed Mr. Wrench.

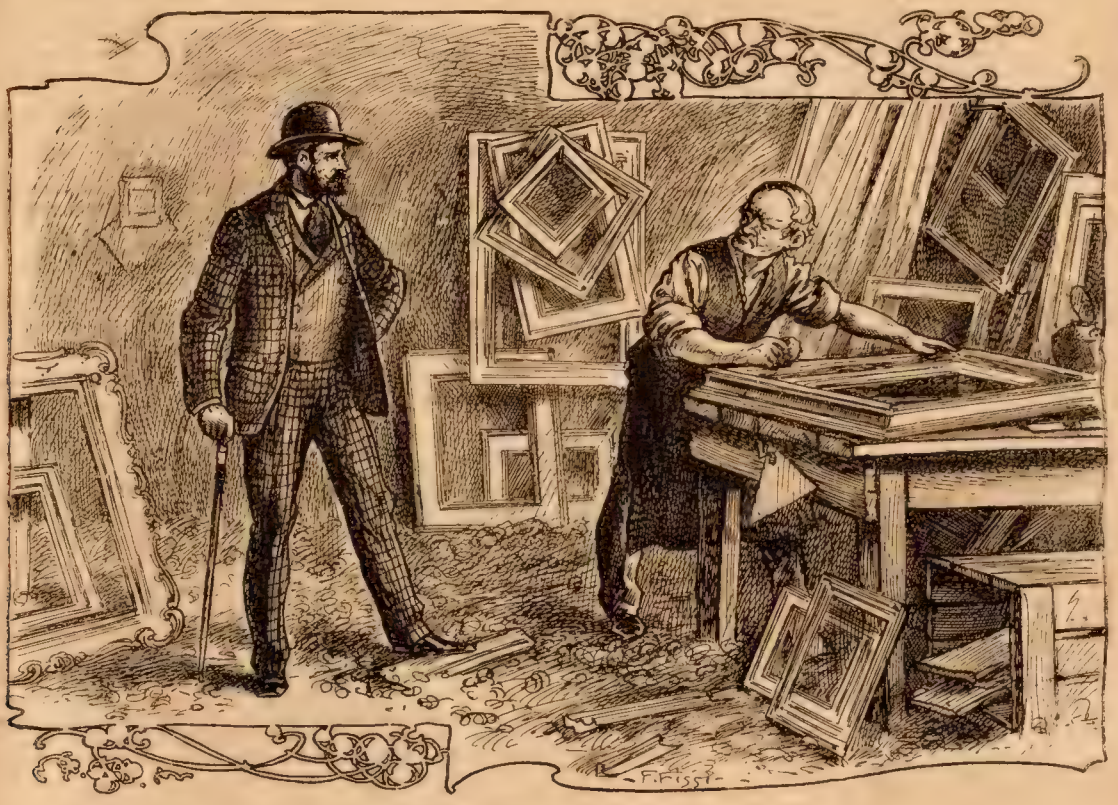
"Therein consists our greatest difficulty—the lapse of time. That's a remarkably beautiful frame you are gilding—just my sort."

"Not bad," returned our hero; "but I have had a deal better under my hands. But I am sorry I can't help you to find the persons you are seeking. What town did they reside in?"

"Ah! several. I will read you over the names."

Mr. Wrench drew out his pocket-book, and ran over the list of places which he had copied from the postmarks on the letters at Broxbridge Hall.

"You know," he said, when he had finished the list; "I don't want any information from you without paying handsomely for it. It is most imperative that I should find these people, if they be still alive."



"AVELINE,' REPLIED THE DETECTIVE.

"Oh, is it?" cried Peace. "Well, look here, I can't tell you anything about them, and if I could——"

"You wouldn't, is that what you mean?" said his visitor sharply.

"Don't be quite so fast. I know nothing about you, and don't even know your name."

Mr. Wrench drew a case from his pocket, and gave our hero his card. On it was:

"MR. DETECTIVE WRENCH,
"Scotland Yard."

"Ah!" ejaculated our hero. "That's it—eh?"

"What?"

"A criminal affair. Some poor crow is wanted."

"Nothing of the sort. I pledge my word as a gentleman, and——"

"A detective," added Peace. "Go on, governor."

"I tell you it is nothing of the sort. The facts are simply these. The lady eloped with her music-master. Her relatives cast her off—now they are anxious to find her. Let me disabuse your mind of a false impression."

"I never knew or even heard of such a person as Montini, and am therefore unable to assist you; but have you no clue to them—no letters?"

"Oh, yes, we have letters. That is how we know the different towns they visited. The last one is from the lady. She announces the birth of a daughter, who is named after herself."

"What name might that be?" inquired Peace carelessly, removing the superfluous gold from the frame.

"Aveline," returned the detective.

"Aveline!" exclaimed Peace, in a tone of surprise, which he found it impossible to suppress.

"Yes. Have you ever met with one bearing that name?" eagerly inquired Mr. Wrench, who was at no loss to comprehend that one chance shot had told.

"Yes, I think so. The name seems familiar to me."

"My dear sir," exclaimed the detective, rising from his Windsor chair, and approaching nearer to his companion, "if you can let me know about this person you shall be rewarded handsomely. It is a most uncommon name, and it may furnish us with a clue to the missing person."

"It is not a very common name, I admit; but, then, there may be hundreds of persons who bear it."

"You know one, it would seem. Can you tell me where she's to be found?"

"You take me by surprise," observed Peace; "and I cannot quite call to mind just at present where I met with such a person. I know it must be a long time ago. I will think the matter over, and see if I can assist you."

Mr. Wrench saw plainly enough that Peace was not to be caught tripping—he was too wary a customer for that; he therefore deemed it advisable not to press the question further at that time. He, therefore, said in an off-hand manner:

"Well, you will see what you can do for me, like a good fellow, as I am told you are, and so farewell for the present."

"Aveline!" ejaculated our hero, when he found himself once more alone. "What can be the meaning of this inquiry? He cannot be in search of the Aveline Maitland I knew—and loved," he added, in a tone of dejection; "no, that is not possible."

Peace was fairly puzzled. He had no predilection for detectives. They were a class of men whose acquaintance he had no desire to cultivate.

When his day's work was finished he returned to the Carved Lion.

"The vicar has been here inquiring for you," said Brickett. "I told him where you worked, but he said he would call here again later on."

"The vicar—and what might he want? Going to give me an order for some Oxford frames, I suppose—eh?"

"No, I don't think so. It's private business, I believe. You see, old man, people are beginning to take notice of you."

In less than an hour after Peace's return Canon Lenthal called again at the inn.

He was shown into a private room in which our hero was seated.

The vicar was introduced by Brickett.

"You will pardon this intrusion, sir, I hope," said the minister, "but I wait upon you at the request of Lord Ethalwood, whom I believe you have some knowledge of."

"I've worked for his lordship."

"So he informed me. Well, Mr. Peace, I understand that you have some knowledge of a lady whose Christian name is Aveline. Possibly you would not care about furnishing Mr. Wrench with all the particulars concerning her. I can readily comprehend that, and hence it is that I pay this visit. It is to assure you, sir, that you will be conferring an inestimable favour upon Lord Ethalwood by giving him the address of the lady in question. His lordship had a daughter named Aveline, she has been lost to him for years, and——"

"The young lady I knew could not possibly be his daughter," cried Peace. "She is too young for that."

"Admitted, but the circumstance is a most remarkable one—I mean the coincidence as to the names. I am here to make an earnest appeal. Let me entreat and implore of you to give all the information you can."

Peace considered for some little time; presently he said:

"Under the circumstances of the case, I feel that I should not be justified in refusing. I will furnish you with what information I have in my power to give."

"I am overjoyed to hear you make such a declaration. Will you confer with Mr. Wrench, or give me the particulars?"

"I will confer with Mr. Wrench, if you desire it."

"That will be the best course. Accept my most sincere thanks," said the vicar, offering his hand to Peace. "I felt assured my appeal would not be made in vain."

Well pleased with the result of his interview, Canon Lenthal hastened back to Broxbridge Hall.

On the following morning Charles Peace put Mr. Wrench in possession of all the particulars he was able to furnish in respect to the young lady whom he had known as Aveline Maitland, but who had become Mrs. Gatliffe three or four years since.

The detective listened to the details with the greatest degree of interest. He was under the full impression that they might ultimately turn out to be of great service to him in tracing Aveline Ethalwood.

"I will at once proceed to Sheffield, Mr. Peace," he said in a cheerful manner. "It is indeed a most fortunate meeting—I mean, of course, ours. Should I be successful you will be duly rewarded, for I am free to acknowledge that you rendered me all the assistance it is possible for anyone to do similarly circumstanced."

"I wouldn't be too sanguine," observed Peace. "The young woman, whose name and address I have given, you will find, I fear, will be of little service, but it is not for me to dictate or anticipate. Make whatever use you think fit of the information you have obtained in so singular and unexpected a manner."

The detective was driven to the station by Lord Ethalwood's coachman, and in a few hours he was at the door of the cottage which had at one time been in the occupation of Mrs. Maitland.

He was informed by its present occupant that the former tenant had left; she went to live with her daughter and son-in-law at Rotherham, soon after their union.

Mrs. Wrench hastened thither. He was informed that they had all left the town, and were residing somewhere in London.

The detective was not to be baffled. He waited on Tom Gatliffe's former employer, and one of the partners informed him that their late foreman was managing a business in the Euston Road.

He put up at one of the leading hotels in Sheffield, having determined upon proceeding to the metropolis on the following day.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Since his marriage with Aveline Maitland the reader has heard but little of Tom Gatliffe. The young engineer was the best and most loving of husbands; he worked steadily at his business, and in every respect was persevering in his endeavours to improve his position; but trade at the works where he was employed was not nearly so flourishing as it had been prior to his marriage. He, in common with his fellow-workmen, suffered by the depression.

After remaining two years at Rotherham, he accepted an offer to take the management of some works in London.

He had another reason for doing this. His young wife had grown tired of Sheffield, Rotherham, and their surroundings, and yearned to be a denizen of the great city about which she had heard so much, but of which she had seen so little.

Aveline Gatliffe showed symptoms of discontent—she wanted some change of scene.

Her husband took a charming house at Wood Green, which he furnished, not grandly, perhaps, but with every comfort which persons in their station of life could desire.

Here he, his wife, and their child—a beautiful little boy of about three years old—were located.

Let us pay a visit to the home of the British workman.

At the door of the habitation stands a young and beautiful woman. She is barely two-and-twenty, but does not look even as old as that; her hair of shining brown looks like gold in the sunshine; her eyes are of violet blue; her dress is quite plain, but the homely material only shows the grace and beauty of her figure to greater advantage. Such are the most noticeable features of Aveline Gatliffe.

The young wife's gaze was directed down the road which led to the station; the rays of the setting sun cast long shadows across this from the trees which skirted its sides.

Presently her countenance was irradiated with a smile. She heard the sounds of approaching footsteps, she hastened onwards, and in a few minutes she saw her husband in the distance.

"Ah, dearest, you've been waiting and watching for me. Is it not so?" cried Tom Gatliffe.

The young woman smiled and nodded; then they walked slowly home together.

(To be continued.)

in the London University, besides being the author of several standard books.

Dr. Lankester marvelled at the accounts of the doings of "Dr." Slade which reached him from time to time, and determined to go and consult the wizard himself, to see what the spirits had to say to him. He went, and was soon ushered into the presence of the wonder-worker by Simmons, who managed that part of the business. Simmons generally took good care to find out all he could about the clients before his partner took them in hand, for the shreds of information which he was thus able to supply were really the essence of the messages. Whether he was careless in the case of Dr. Lankester, or whether he took him merely as an ordinary person who was not of much account, we cannot say, but certain it is that the mistake which led to the disaster that overtook the charlatan was directly due to Slade not being informed that his client was a scientist of no mean parts.

As it was, Dr. Lankester sat down at the table with Slade, who had his back to the light, and who strove to "pump" him as to his former experiences with spirits. Then the spiritualist began to shiver, and said that the fit was coming on him. All the while he chattered to his client, who from time to time heard raps under the table, and received kicks in the ordinary spiritualistic manner. At last, when he was apparently interested, Slade produced a slate, and said that he would see if the spirits were actually present. Lankester saw the slate put under the table, heard a little scratching, meanwhile the spiritual patter went on, and then Slade produced the slate, with the message, "I am here to help you.—Allie," written on it. Slade then explained that Allie was his wife, who had been dead for some years and whose spirit hovered over him constantly, and acted as interpreter for the spirits of the friends of his visitors. He added that Allie sometimes had some difficulty in fetching a spirit at the moment it was wanted. This we can well believe if she had to search in both worlds!

Dr. Lankester listened attentively to all that Slade had said, and then bade him good-bye, remarking that he hoped to call on him again. He forgot to add, however, that he had seen Slade's wrist moving while he was writing the message on the slate under the table.

A few days later Professor Lankester called again, in company with Dr. Donkin, assistant physician of the Westminster Hospital. After a wait they were both shown into the consulting-room, and offered seats at the table where the "doctor" sat. Lankester sat next to Slade, and Donkin opposite the quack. Apparently it never occurred to Simmons or Slade that there might be persons who did not believe in spiritualism, or that there were men who would not allow themselves to be imposed upon if they could help it, for again only the names of the clients were given, and save for Simmons having casually asked Donkin if he had any spiritualistic experience, and been told that he had not, no real inquiries had been made.

While talking as volubly as he could, Slade began the customary manifestations, both clients receiving occasional kicks from him. Then he produced the slate, which he showed them, and, after placing it beneath the table, a scratching was heard, and then the slate was put upon the table, and the words, "I am with you.—Allie," exhibited upon it. Again he explained who Allie was. "The spirits are here now," he continued. "Shall we see if we can get a message from them?" The two scientists agreed, and again the slate was placed under the table, and after the customary scratching had been heard, during which Slade talked as fast as he could and Lankester squeezed Donkin's hand to draw his attention, it was produced, with the words, "'He can be a good writing medium.'" As Slade explained, that referred to Donkin, and assured the physician that he was highly honoured by the spirits. "Last time you were here some of your relatives' spirits were present, weren't they?" then inquired the quack of Professor Lankester. On being told that they were, the slate was again brought into requisition, and, after a rather jerky scratching, the words, "Samuel Lankester," were found on it. As the zoologist had no relatives of that name, he thought he might as well try to have it corrected, so, looking at it carefully, he said, "I think that is meant for Edwin." Slade also examined it, and said that of course it was. Then the slate was laid on his knee, while he shivered

"YOU ARE A DAMNED LIAR!" CRIED DONKIN.

and coughed violently. But while that was going on Donkin had his eyes open, and watched him like a cat. At last the coughing fit was over, and Slade pressed the slate up against the table, asking Lankester to hold one corner of it. Dr. Lankester put his hand beneath the table to do so, and suddenly snatched the slate away from the charlatan, and stood up and showed it to Donkin. There was a message which ran, "I am glad to meet you.—Edwin Lankester," written upon it in a fairly firm handwriting. Slade said that it was from the professor's father.

"You're a damned liar!" cried Donkin; while Lankester said, "You have written upon it yourself. I have watched you doing it each time. You are a scoundrel and an impostor!"

Slade turned pale and sank back into a chair. The two professors walked straight into the ante-room, where there were half-a-dozen ladies waiting for their turns to come, and Lankester showed them the slate, and told them exactly what had happened. Simmons ran out and tried to bluster. Then Lankester said that he would write to the papers and expose the swindle. "It does not matter if you do," replied Simmons. "We have had two hundred here to-day, and they will all come back to see whether your representation is true or not. It has been done before, but it has done us good." Then the scientists said that they felt that it was due to the public that they should expose the concern. At this Simmons dropped his swaggering manner, and said that he did not advise them to write to the papers; it only made a lot of unnecessary trouble. With that Donkin and Lankester left, and, going to their clubs, wrote an account of what had happened, and despatched it to the "Times." The letters were published, and Slade replied, but could only say that he had not written the messages with a piece of pencil concealed beneath his nails. Anybody could be sure of this by looking at his nails, which were cut very short.

The exposure brought a whole shoal of letters from people who firmly believed in the claims of "Dr." Slade, and who repudiated all suggestions that the manifestations were merely tricks. This aroused Lankester and other men of learning, and for the good of the public they decided to take the case even further, and applied at Bow Street for a warrant against Slade on a charge of deceiving the public by means of a trick, and against both Slade and Simmons for conspiracy to defraud by means of a trick. The warrants were issued, and the "doctor" was arrested with his partner Simmons.

There was hardly breathing room in Bow Street Police Court on Monday, October 2, 1876, when the case came on for hearing before Mr. Flowers. Slade was allowed a seat on the bench, instead of being placed in the ordinary dock. He was defended by Mr. Munton, of the firm of Munton and Munton; while Mr. George Lewis, now the eminent Sir George, prosecuted on behalf of Dr. Ray Lankester and several others. Before the case was opened Mr. Munton complained to the Bench that certain papers had spoken of Slade as "a common impostor," and had said that if his character was wanted, inquirers had better apply to Messrs. Lewis and Lewis. He was sure that the solicitors for the prosecution knew nothing about it, but he hoped that the magistrate would stop such comments being made. Mr. Flowers said nothing.

Then Mr. George Lewis commenced to open his case. He said that the spiritualist's title of "doctor" only existed in his own mind, and was analogous to the ordinary conjuror's "professor." The main features of the case were described as we know them. Mr. Lewis also said that sometimes the message was written on the slate beforehand. The slate was then apparently cleaned, but the sponge was soaked in spirits of wine instead of water, and when the slate was perfectly dry the writing appeared again. He showed the magistrate how this took place by writing the sentence, "I wonder whether the spirits will appear before the magistrates to-day," on the slate and then cleaning it with spirits. After a time the writing came out faintly. It was subsequently explained that Slade did not use an ordinary slate pencil, but a specially-prepared one, which the daily papers of the period called a "Slade pencil"; the result was then perfect. He had Mr. Maskelyne, of Maskelyne and Cooke's, present, who would do any of Slade's "mysteries" in the open court for the benefit of the magistrate, and afterwards show him "how it was done."

Dr. Lankester was then called as the first witness. He gave an account of the séances at which he attended. Mr. Munton cross-examined him, but could not shake him, save on the point that he could not swear that the pencil was concealed beneath the finger-nail. It was somewhere attached to Slade's hand; that was enough.

The table which had been used at the séance was brought into court at the next hearing and exhibited. To all outward appearance it was a Pembroke table, save for the fact that it had a large flap, which was not supported by a couple of brackets in the usual way, but had one large bracket revolving on a pin in the framework of the body of the table. This supported the flap, and the end of it came directly opposite where Slade sat.

Mr. Maskelyne then went into the box. Munton, the prisoners' solicitor, greatly objected to him being called as a witness, but Mr. Lewis overruled him, saying that he had as much right to call him as to produce any other expert. The conjuror first tackled the table, which he said was "a very handy piece of furniture for a magician." He explained that the end of the single bracket acted as a support for the slate, in case that article was too heavy for Slade to hold and write on at the same time. He assured the magistrate that a piece of pencil could be held beneath the nail, but that was a very clumsy way of doing it. He produced a little thimble, with a fragment of slate pencil attached thereto, saying that the best and most reliable spiritualists used these thimbles. With it on he wrote on the slate, "Spirits are present," and handed it up

The Doctor was arrested.

to the magistrate, who burst out laughing. He then showed how, by means of elastic, the thimble vanished up the performer's sleeve. He said that any one of the tricks which the prisoners did he could do. At the same time, he had written to the papers and promised not to perform any of the Slade tricks till the case had been adjudicated upon, as it was not fair to the prisoners.

Cross-examined by Mr. Munton, he was asked what he would say if he were told that "Dr." Slade was perfectly well able to produce spirits in the Egyptian Hall without any apparatus of any kind. "I think it's a great pity he does not always do so," was his reply. "He'd make his fortune. I will do his tricks, but I will do them by pure deception. I don't call it spiritualism," added the great conjuror.

Mr. Donkin swore to the séance at which he was present, and said that he distinctly saw the prisoner Slade writing on his knee, and coughing to hide the sound of the pencil. He also saw the muscles of his arms move when he was writing with the slate held against the table. He was convinced that it was pure imposture.

At the third hearing, when the prisoners surrendered to their bail of £100 each and two sureties of £50 each, a Mr. Clarke told the magistrate how he had been at a séance. He

had been pulled about by the prisoner Slade, who said it was the spirits. Several times his trousers had been pulled, and once he had been touched indecently. When he complained, Slade said, "Is it pleasant to you to be touched? I don't like it myself; some people do." He had mentioned the name of an imaginary dead person to Simmons before the séance, and at the consultation had received a message from this person.

Mr. Hutton, of the "Spectator," told the court how he had produced a double-locked slate, and asked Slade to get the spirits to write a message between the two leaves. The wizard had replied that his wife had promised the other spirits never to write on a locked slate!

Mrs. Lankester, the mother of the professor, then gave an account of a séance which she had attended. She had been spoken to by Simmons prior to going in to see Slade, and had told him that once she had been very much impressed by a message from "Phœbe." Apparently Phœbe was flattered by this, for when she was shown the slate by "Dr." Slade it contained a message for her from the obliging spirit. The witness did not know who Phœbe was!

A cabinet-maker then described the table, which had been made by himself to the order of Simmons. He had fitted it with a couple of brackets in the ordinary way, but Simmons had made him take them off and adjust the long, pivoted support. To make this the proper length he had taken the measurement of Slade's knees when sitting down. There was no doubt that the bracket was essential to the table, for he had several times been made to alter it a little before the table was accepted as perfect.

At this stage Mr. Flowers said that he was going to dismiss the charge of conspiracy against the prisoners, and that accordingly Simmons would be discharged, but he would go on with the charge against Slade of deceiving the public, under the Vagrancy Act.

As the case for the prosecutors was closed, Mr. Munton called one or two persons for the defence. Foremost was a Dr. Wylde, who had been one of the sureties for the prisoner Slade. He said that he implicitly believed in the spiritualist. On one occasion he had received a message from a spirit, written on a slate which was lying under his own elbow at the time. The message contained the names of four members of his own family. He thought that Slade was a genuine medium. Mr. Bohn also avowed his entire belief in the marvellous Slade. Then came a Mr. Jay (ominous name), who said that he was sure the prisoner was a good man and would not deceive anybody. He knew that the messages were genuine, for since the "persecution" of Slade had commenced he was present when the following message was found on the slate, written by Slade's dead wife:

> "Dear Friend,—We all feel to bless you for the kindness shown my dear husband. I hope he will not get discouraged, for all will be well for him. He is in the right, and in future years he will prove it so. I shall be with him to encourage him and give him strength. "Allie."

Allie, in her spiritual form, obviously used a Yankee dialect!

Simmons also gave evidence on behalf of his partner. He said that when Slade practised as a clairvoyant physician he paid a tax to the Government of the United States, and was very indignant when Mr. Lewis suggested that it was a "showman's tax." The only really important point in the witness's testimony was that as many as 300 persons sometimes visited the "studio" in one day, and that he shared the shekels with "Dr." Slade.

Mr. Flowers, after taking a day to consider his judgment, said that he felt that he was bound to convict the prisoner as an impostor. There could be no doubt in the minds of any who had followed the evidence which had taken up the time of the court for so many days that Slade was a mere charlatan, who lived by deceiving other people. The least he could do was to inflict the maximum punishment allowed by the law for that offence, and send Slade to prison for three months with hard labour.

In the following year Slade left the inhospitable shores of England, and returned to the States, where he did not long survive his disgrace. Presumably "Allie" was pining for his society!

A Man of Sense.

Possibly the most sensible speech ever delivered—a perfect gem of brevity—was that of a man who, during some riots in America, was asked what his politics were, but he looked at their weapons, the pistols and bludgeons, and then made answer: "Gentlemen, I am of the same opinion as that gentleman there with the big axe."

Criminality of Animals

Sentence and Execution of a Sow.

In the course of a correspondence in the "Athenæum" some thirty years ago, referring to the execution of a bull for the crime of murder in France, several curious but authentic incidents with respect to the criminality of animals came to be recorded. Here are a few: On June 4, 1094, a pig was hanged from a gibbet, near Laon, for devouring the babe of one Jéhan Lenfant, a cowherd. Again, on January 10, 1457, a sow and her six sucklings were charged with murder and homicide on the person of Jéhan Martin, of Savigny, when the former was found guilty and sentenced to be hanged by the hind feet from the branch of a tree. As for the piglings, in default of any positive proofs that they had assisted in mangling the deceased, although covered with blood, they were restored to their owner, on condition that he should give bail for their appearance in the event of further evidence being forthcoming to prove their complicity in their mother's crime. The owner, however, declined to become in any way answerable for the conduct of such ill-bred animals, which were thereupon declared forfeited—not to the parents of the murdered child, but to the noble damsel, Katherine de Bernault, Lady of Savigny.

Yet again, on March 2, 1552, the Chapter of Chartres, after due investigation of the circumstances, sentenced a pig, that had killed a little girl, to be hanged from a gallows erected on the very spot polluted by the bloody deed.

Even so late as 1612 a pig was convicted of having worried to death and partially devoured a child, 14 or 15 months old, the son of a mason residing at Molinchart, also within the jurisdiction of Laon, and the signed warrant for its execution (a copy of which is before us in French) was made, and is still preserved.

Animals were also liable to spiritual censures, as well as to penal sentences, in those days, especially in that particular part of France, for we find the Bishop of Laon, in 1120, excommunicating a swarm of caterpillars in the same terms which the Council of Rheims had employed in the preceding year in denouncing priests who indulged in the sin of matrimony.

Still later, in 1516, the Courts of Troyes, complying with the prayers of the inhabitants of Villenoxe, admonished the caterpillars by which that district was then infested to take themselves off within six days, on pain of being declared "accursed and excommunicated."

Curious Reason for Committing Crime.

Doctor: "My dear sir, you are suffering from nervous exhaustion, the result of over-work. Your only chance is perfect rest for six months, combined with plain, wholesome food, pure air, and the most unexceptional hygienic conditions."

Patient: "And how am I to procure them?"

Doctor: "You must commit a crime. As you leave my house, take one of my overcoats with you; there are several hanging up in the hall. I will have you arrested before you leave the street far behind you, and in a day or two you will find yourself in the most ideal circumstances for regaining your health, strength, and spirits. When they are restored I will see that your character is duly cleared, and you will be able to resume your valuable labours for the good of mankind."

Brevity at the Bar.

Brevity at the bar is painfully uncommon. Mr. Justice North once delivered, in the High Court of Bombay, the shortest charge ever given to a jury: "Gentlemen of the jury, the prisoners have nothing to say, and I have nothing to say; what have you got to say?" "Guilty," was what the prisoners heard the jury say.

Mr. Justice Honyman, during an Assize at Hereford, was equally sparing in speech. "Gentlemen of the jury," he said, at the close of a long and tedious trial, "you have heard the evidence, and you have heard the learned counsel. It is for you to decide. If you believe the evidence of the defendant, the plaintiff is up a tree." In two minutes the jury pushed the plaintiff "up a tree."

Brutal Attack upon Little Caroline Warns by George Baldry.

A PRETTY COTTAGE GIRL DONE TO DEATH.

"Is there, in human form, that bears a heart,
A wretch! a villain! lost to love and truth!
That can, with studied, sly, ensnaring art,
Betray sweet Jenny's (Carrie's) unsuspecting youth?"
—BURNS, "The Cotter's Saturday Night."

IT was on the morning of the 8th of August, 1850, that the peaceful little village of Thurlton, in the county of the Broads, was startled by a tragedy which struck terror to the breast and made the tears steal down the cheeks of every villager far and near.

In a pretty cottage standing back from the road, with its front covered with roses, and its garden bright with flowers, there lived an honest, hard-working man, his wife, and two children, a boy and a girl. The man's name was Warns, and he had worked on a neighbouring farm for twenty years and more, his wife during the harvest-time, or when women's labour was available, doing her day's work and helping to provide the comforts, and even luxuries to such people as they, of their happy little home. Everybody respected the Warnses, but, although they jogged along pretty comfortably, there was one drawback to their happiness, and that was the birth of a son who grew up to be, if not quite an idiot, a youth with an unevenly-balanced mind, so much so that at the age of fifteen he was unable, like other lads of the village, to do work of any kind, so was, unfortunately, a burden upon the family, besides being a great anxiety.

However, as if Providence would compensate the parents for this misfortune, they had a daughter, a bright, pretty, intelligent girl, who at the age of fourteen had grown to be quite a little woman, not only in stature, but in her manner, and was looking after the domestic affairs in the absence of her mother when at work, and was, in fact, housewife.

The cottage was not very commodious, although somewhat larger than those occupied by their neighbours, for it boasted of three bedrooms, a comfortable and well-furnished parlour, and a kitchen.

It was a beautiful, bright summer morning, the birds singing, and all nature looking her brightest as the parents of Caroline Warns rose about a quarter before five o'clock to go to their work at the farm. The bedroom which they occupied was somewhat peculiarly situated, for it was a middle room, and anybody passing from the other two chambers had to go through it to approach the stairs.

On this particular morning their daughter, who occupied usually a small ante-room, had been conveyed to her parents' bed by her father, for the girl was suffering with an attack of ague, and her mother had desired her to keep to the room until she returned from the farm for breakfast, little suspecting what an awful tragedy would be enacted in that pretty little room, with the scent of the roses entering the open window, through which the morning sunshine streamed.

They had been gone about half an hour, when the door of the third room opened, and a man, half dressed, made his appearance. His name was George Baldry, a labouring man, of about thirty years of age, who had lodged with the Warns for nearly fourteen years, and had been treated by the old people almost as their own son. He was a simple-minded fellow, who had a good character, and interfered with nobody. Consequently, the unsuspecting cottager never dreamed that it was unsafe to leave his young daughter in the house with the man who had seen the girl grow up from her cradle and nursed her when she was in long clothes.

But "still waters run deep," and, quiet and unassuming as George Baldry appeared to be, he was a lustful man, and as the pretty child grew to become a fine, handsome girl, and seemed budding into womanhood at so early an age, he feasted his eyes upon the girl, and his lecherous nature became intensified. From the innocent play with which he amused little Carrie when they romped together in the hayfields was a short step to a feeling of quite a different nature, and the simple-minded labourer, like a fool that he was, fostered the idea that he loved the girl, and would have, had he dared, persuaded her to leave her home. All this time the father was unsuspecting. Not so the mother, however, for she, with the keener maternal affection, had noticed certain familiarities which, perhaps were not sufficient to excite suspicion, but which she felt were unbecoming now that Caroline had arrived at a certain age. Baldry would take the girl upon his knee, and sometimes the romping would be of a nature to call for censure on the mother's part, and Caroline would receive a severe scolding.

But to return to the morning of the 8th of August, 1850. Caroline lay, lightly sleeping, in her parents' bed, and she looked very pretty, her fair hair flowing over the pillow, and her pale face looking like a sculptor's work in marble. Her bare arms lay on the patch-work coverlid, and her chest, so much developed for her age, heaved regularly as she slept peacefully.

And George Baldry stood enraptured as he gazed upon the pretty young girl. Closer and closer he crept, noiselessly, to the bed-side, and then, he could resist no longer. Throwing his arms around the recumbent form, he pressed his lips passionately upon those of the girl, and, with a piercing shriek, as if she had been awakened by a serpent's sting, she started up, and, with flashing eyes, bade the man withdraw. Caroline Warns was no longer the child of fourteen. She had in those brief moments leapt into womanhood.

"George! George! How can you be so cruel to me? I swear that if you do not leave this room at once I'll call for help, and my father shall reckon with you." And the poor child buried her face in the pillow and burst into tears.

Quivering with anger, and fear of the consequences, George Baldry stood for a moment speechless. Then he used endearing words, but an attempt to embrace the girl once more called forth another scream, and he darted to the door furious with passion.

"Curse you!" he said. "So that's your little game, is it? You'll tell your father, will you? My God, we'll see about that, you jade!" and he descended the stairs hurriedly.

As soon as Baldry left the room, Caroline, paler than ever, and trembling like an aspen leaf, leapt from the bed and was making for her own little room to hurriedly get her clothes on, when she was met by the now furious man. George Baldry was no longer the simple-minded, inoffensive lodger in whom so much confidence and esteem had been reposed. His expression was that of a fiend as he barred the girl's way to the door, and he was for the moment dumb with fury, the foam pouring from his mouth.

At length, finding speech, he hissed out rather than spoke, "So, you cursed jade, you'll tell your father, will you? Take that, and damn you!" And he raised a heavy hammer and brought it down upon the defenceless girl's head; but she had been quick enough to stay the force of the blow by placing her hands up to guard herself as the cruel instrument came down upon her hands, crushing one thumb and breaking a finger. Again was the hammer raised, this time with fearful effect, for it cut into the forehead, making a great bruised dent, and the blood gushed forth, forming a great red stream that ran down the poor girl's face, over her white nightdress, and made a great pool upon the floor.

When the man realised what he had done, he seemed stupefied, and then, as if reason was dawning upon his mind, as Caroline reeled back he caught her in his arms, and picking her up, carried her down into the kitchen and laid her upon the bricks. Then, hanging the hammer upon a nail

where it was usually kept, he went into the scullery and put on his boots, afterwards making off through the back garden.

Strange to say, although the blows which the poor girl had received had been dealt with terrific force, they had missed the vital part of the brain, and had not rendered her insensible. As soon as her assailant had gone, she struggled to her feet and managed to get to the door, withdraw the peg with which it was fastened, and stagger into the garden, calling out, "Aunt, aunt! pray, pray come!"

Mrs. Ives, her aunt, lived next door, and at once came to the girl's assistance. It was a terrible sight for the poor lady, for her niece was bathed in blood from head to foot, and presented a ghastly appearance, with the sun shining upon the crimson and white face and dress.

At the same time a neighbour named Ministers, attracted by the cries, came upon the scene, and the girl said, "Baldry has done it! Baldry has done it with a hammer!"

Faint from the loss of blood, she was carried into Mrs. Ives's cottage. The feelings of the poor parents may be better imagined than described, for they were home within half

Mr. George Copeman, clerk to the magistrates, took down a statement made by poor little Caroline whilst she was dying, and we will quote it, for it tells the story of this painful tragedy so simply and so pathetically:

"When George Baldry came up to my bed he asked me when I was going to get up. I said, 'Not yet.' I had then a cat in bed. I was afraid that he was going to get the cat, and I covered it up. He then struck me a blow on the side of the head, and another on the front. I put up my hand to save the blow, and he struck my thumb. He struck me five or six blows on the head. After he struck me one blow, I looked to see what he struck me with, but the blows came so quick I could not see. He sat on the bedside after he had finished striking me. I felt the blood run down my arm, and then I got out of bed, and he took me in his arms and downstairs in the kitchen, and set me down on the bricks. I got up of my own accord and went into the wash-house, and undid the door by drawing two pegs out. I went into the back yard and called to my aunt.

PLACING HER HANDS UP TO GUARD HER HEAD.

an hour of the crime having been committed, and, of course, a surgeon was speedily in attendance. Mr. Robert Pedgrift made an examination, and found the skull fractured and three other wounds besides the laceration of the fingers and thumbs. He immediately ordered her to be taken to the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital, where trepanning was at once resorted to, that being the only possible means of saving the girl's life, as the skull had been crushed in and pressed on the brain.

For days Caroline Warns hovered between life and death, but the operation was so skilfully performed that she recovered consciousness, and could converse plainly, if feebly. The scenes with the heartbroken mother are said to have been very touching, and the father, who loved his bright little Carrie more than anything in the world, completely broke down.

Then came the crisis. So bad did the girl become that it was considered advisable to have her depositions made, and the house-surgeon of the hospital gently broke to the girl her hopeless condition, asking her if she would make her statement before Mr. Barnard, one of the city magistrates. Her reply was, "I am young, but I do not mind dying. I should like to see the gentleman."

I first saw a hammer in Baldry's hand in the wash-house, while he was hanging it up by a string on a nail. Before he walked away, he said, 'Oh, dear! what is the matter?' I had never quarrelled with him. I liked him very well. He sometimes ran me about. My mother told me not to let him play with me. I once told my mother he did so. I do not know whether he knew that I told her. The back and front doors were both fastened up when I went downstairs. Neither my father nor my mother were in the house. This statement is all true, and I make it with the feeling that I shall not recover.

"The mark of X CAROLINE WARNS."

She lingered on until the 26th of August, when she passed peacefully away with her poor little hands resting in those of her father and mother, with a smile upon her face, and with full forgiveness towards her old friend and playmate who had nursed her from infancy and who had so cruelly treated her.

The funeral was a solemn and beautiful ceremony, the coffin being covered with the wild flowers of which she was so fond, and the inhabitants from the villages for miles

round took part as mourners and followed the coffin in one long procession to the little graveyard of the church in which she had been christened but fourteen years previously.

Of course, there was the inquest, at which wilful murder was the verdict of the coroner's jury, and George Baldry was committed for trial. It was clear enough against him, and he was undefended. With little or nothing to say for himself, he seemed dazed when put in the dock, and the only remark which was coherent that he made was:

"My head is so bad I cannot recollect anything. I have only to say that I should ask the jury what reason they would say I should be supposed to have done the job?"

Doctors' evidence was taken as to the man's state of mind, and they agreed that he was of weak intellect, but able to distinguish between right and wrong, and Mr. Justice Erle summed up, and in doing so expressed it as his opinion that the doctrine ought not to be allowed to prevail that when men who have always conducted themselves as ordinary men and of sane mind commit a sudden crime, the mere commission of the offence should be taken to be indicative of such an unsoundness of mind as to exempt them from legal responsibility for the act. He would direct the jury on clear law, that if a man was capable of knowing right from wrong, and was capable of being swayed by those motives which actuate ordinary men—that is to say, fear or hope—the fear of consequences and the hope of escape from punishment, such a man was responsible for his acts. Applying that sound principle to the case, the jury would say whether the deceased came to her death through the wilful and unprovoked violence of the prisoner in the first place, and in the next, whether they thought he was in a state of mind to be made responsible.

After a very brief deliberation the jury returned a verdict of guilty, and George Baldry was sentenced to be hanged for one of the cruellest murders of a pretty, innocent girl that is on record in the annals of crime.

After much agitation, however, the doctors came to the conclusion from his behaviour in prison that the man was scarcely capable of controlling his actions, and the Home Secretary respited him on the 7th of April, and he was kept in prison during Her Majesty's pleasure.

Accused by a Ghost.

IN the year 1746 a farmer named Henry Carpenter was murdered on his return from the market at Southam, in the county of Warwick. A man went the next morning to his wife, and inquired if her husband came home the evening before. She replied that he had not, and that she was under the utmost anxiety and terror on that account. "Your terror," said the other, "cannot equal mine, for last night, as I lay in bed, quite awake, the apparition of your husband appeared to me, showed me several ghastly stabs in his body, told me he had been murdered by such a person, and his carcase thrown into such and such a marl-pit."

The alarm was given, the pit searched, the body found, and the wounds answered the description of them. The man whom the ghost had accused was apprehended and committed on a strong suspicion of murder. His trial took place at Warwick, before the Lord Chief Justice Raymond, when the jury would have convicted, as rashly as the justice of the peace had committed him, had not the judge checked them. He addressed them in words to this effect: "I think, gentlemen, you seem inclined to lay more stress on the evidence of an apparition than it will bear. I cannot say that I give much credit to this kind of story; but, be that as it will, we have no right to follow our own private opinions here. We are now in a court of law, and must determine according to it, and I know not of any law now in being which will admit of the testimony of an apparition, nor yet, if it did, doth the ghost appear to give evidence. Crier," said he, "call the ghost." This was done three times, but, of course, without result. The ghost did not materialise. "Gentlemen of the jury," continued the judge, "the prisoner at the bar, as you heard by undeniable witnesses, is a man of most unblemished character; nor hath it appeared, in the course of the examination, that there was any manner of quarrel or grudge between him and the party deceased. I do verily believe him to be perfectly innocent, and as there is no evidence against him, either positive or circumstantial, he must be acquitted. But from many circumstances which have arisen during the trial I do strongly suspect that the gentleman who saw the apparition was himself the murderer, in which case he might easily ascertain the pit, the stabs, etc., without any supernatural assistance; and on such suspicion I shall think myself justified in committing him to close custody till the matter can be further inquired into." This was immediately done, and a warrant granted for searching his house, when such strong proofs of guilt were discovered that he confessed the murder, and was tried, found guilty, and sentenced to death at the next assizes. He was executed in due course.

Midas AND Murder.

M. PAULAIT SHOOTS A FAMILY IN FRANCE.

Tragedy upon the Highway.

"Tell me, you heavens, in which part of his body
Shall I destroy him? Whether there, there, or there?
That I may give the local wound a name."
—SHAKESPEARE, "Troilus and Cressida."

FIFTY years ago the roads through the provinces of France were far away better than those in this country, and, although the facilities for travelling were perhaps not nearly so good as ours, there was more comfort, and, if slower, it was certainly cheaper. Instead of the mail coach, with its four spankers of leaders and wheelers, was in ordinary use for travellers the one or two-horse diligence, which did its easy stages from town to town where there were no railways. These were freely patronised by those who could not afford to keep vehicles and horses of their own, either for long or short distances, for even the poorer Frenchman will never walk if he can ride.

On March 2, 1850, the diligence that passed from Limoges to Angoulême was well filled, for the fair at Belloc, a well-known market-town near the first-mentioned place, had come to a conclusion, and many who had attended it were returning home to different parts of the country. One of the stopping-places for the diligence was a wine-shop, with the uncommon sign of the Green Bull, on the road to Magnac, and here most of the travellers alighted, in order to take their luncheons, of a most substantial character, washed down by the white wine of the country.

It was a merry, talkative party, with a Babel of voices only to be produced by Frenchmen in a restaurant, accompanied by the indispensable gesticulations. But, then, there was so much to talk about—the fair, the great annual outing for the countrymen, for our neighbours across the Channel did—and do now, for the matter of that—consider pleasure entitled to run a close head with business. Then, of course, there were the village scandals up to date to discuss and the doings of their neighbours, with gratuitous criticisms thrown in. Then, of course, the latest Parisian news was discussed, and the question asked whether the electric submarine telegraph, which had just then been successfully laid across the Channel, would prove a boon to the two countries. Oh, if those simple, provincial travellers could have looked into the vista leading to the twentieth century, what would they have had to discuss in the Green Bull at Magnac when the magic name of Marconi was mentioned to them?

Sitting at a table aloof from all, and taking his luncheon, with a bottle of fine champagne from Epernay before him, together with a Château bottle of red wine from the Médoc, was a well-dressed, stern-looking man, of about thirty-six years of age. His name was Paulait, and he was a well-to-do land proprietor for those parts, his farm being valued at 40,000f. (£1,600). It needed but a glance at the man to tell that he was miserable. Perhaps he had cause to be, for his wife lived most unhappily with him, and he had lost his six children one after the other. Perhaps he deserved pity. Yet nobody seemed to sympathise with him, for it was known

pretty universally that he was a money-grubber and that he was one of those selfish individuals who had but few friends and companions. Those who passed him at luncheon, and were acquainted with M. Paulait, bowed, bade him a "Bon jour," and moved on. None stayed to converse with him.

Presently there was a noise of many voices and the sound of much laughter and merriment at the door of the inn. A char-à-banc had pulled up, and the occupants were being greeted by numbers of the guests with the greatest cordiality. The new arrivals were the family of M. Renaud, a farmer of the district, and consisted of Renaud and his wife, their eldest son and his wife, also the second son, who had just left the military service and had been married but a month previously, his bride being one of the party. Altogether they made a joyous, happy party, and they were driving over to the college, on a visit to another son of the family, who was there finishing his education.

Hastily rising from his seat as he heard the voices of the Renauds, M. Paulait drained the tumbler of wine before him and threw his serviette savagely upon the table. "Curse them!" he muttered to himself. "What do they want here, I wonder? I wish all their souls were in hell, especially that of the old woman, for it is she who makes Renaud hold so tight to his bargain, that I'll swear to!" And he strode out of the big room, in which all the animated conversation was going on, and seated himself in a small writing-room attached to the office of the inn. Ringing the bell, the landlord came to attend to him.

"Where are they going, monsieur? You know who I mean—the Renauds," he asked quietly, as he lit his cigar and asked his host to join him in a drink.

"On a visit to their son at college, I hear," said the landlord; "and I understand they will drive back again this way about four or five this afternoon. So we shall have their patronage again, for they never pass my inn. What a jolly fellow is Renaud, and what a charming woman his wife!"

"Curse them!" muttered Paulait under his breath. Then, turning to the landlord, he asked for writing materials, and when they were placed before him he filled their tumblers to the brim, and, standing up with one foot upon the chair, raised his glass, saying, "Monsieur, I drink to you for the last time, perhaps. I shall leave this part of the country, never to return."

The diligence had left with the travellers and the char-à-banc had rumbled off with the happy Renaud family, and all was quiet in the Green Bull when Paulait sealed the letter he had written, placed it in his breast-pocket, and stalked out, with a murderous look upon his countenance and his fists clenched, as a man who was bent upon mischief.

And now let us tell why there was such bitter feeling on the part of M. Paulait, for his neighbour Renaud had no feeling of malice, and would have been pleasant enough with the man. So miserable had Paulait become at the loss of his children and the manner in which he was treated, that he determined to sell up his property and seek peace of mind elsewhere. So he put up the little estate for sale, and M. Renaud, together with a M. Chaumoneux, made a bid of 33,000f. This was accepted, but Paulait immediately repented of what he had done, and desired to cry off the bargain. This way of doing business, however, did not suit the purchasers, and they were determined not to release the vendor unless he forfeited the sum of 5,000 francs. This was agreed to, and the money was to have been paid within a given period; but when the time came the cash was not forthcoming, and the purchasers threatened to foreclose on the original agreement, Madame Renaud being particularly anxious to secure the property for her family.

HE LET THE BULLET GO STRAIGHT.

Paulait, like a dog in the manger, could not persuade himself to part with the place in which all his children had been born and in which they had died, whilst the payment of 5,000f. for no value at all drove him to desperation. Furthermore, he envied the happy family that was gathered around his neighbour, cursed him for his good fortune, but, above all, had the bitterest hatred for madame.

So, as he quickly walked to his home upon that particular 2nd of March, his disposition was by no means kind, and the very devil himself was holding him by the ear.

"Curse them—curse them!" he repeated to himself again and again, until he ground his teeth with anger and worked himself into a dangerous state of mind, yet with an

expression of stolid determination upon his face which suggested evil.

His first thing to do on his arrival home was to visit the empty rooms in which his children had one by one died, and in which the little cots and furniture had been left undisturbed; but this only tended to infuriate the man ten times more, and not a tear came to his eyes.

"Yes, this very day!" he muttered to himself; and then, proceeding to the kitchen, he took down his two guns and a brace of cavalry pistols, and cleaned them carefully. After this he melted some lead and cast several bullets, and finally loaded the four firearms. It was now nearly three o'clock in the afternoon, so, placing the pistols in his large side-pockets and a gun under each arm, he strolled leisurely along the road in the direction of Chateaupousat, towards Magnac-Lavel, upon which route he knew the Renaud family would return.

Approaching a bend in the road, he secreted himself behind a large holly bush, and there, as still as a statue, awaited the approach of his victims, the guns upon the ground at his feet and the butts of the pistols clutched firmly in his hands.

Soon after four o'clock, when the sun was sinking behind the ploughed fields and the labourers were preparing to cease their work, he heard the grating of wheels upon the road. There was no need to peer through the bush the merry laughter and happy voices told him instantly that it was M. Renaud returning from the college.

Nearer and nearer came the vehicle, when quickly he stooped and picked up the two guns, placing one gainst the fence at the roadside. Bang went the first piece, and the ball crashed into the load of humanity, whilst the horse, checked by the reins and the sudden report, came to a stanstill. Before the shrieks ceased which plainly told of the mischief done, the assassin had dropped one of the guns and picked up the second. Placing it to his shoulder, as if he were quietly practising at the butts, again he let the bullet go straight into the shrieking and bleeding people huddled together in the char-à-banc. Then, advancing with the pistols in each hand, he came near to the suffering victims, whose shrieks for help were frightful.

M. Renaud had fallen into the roadway, and although mortally wounded, had contrived to make his way for at least a hundred yards, whilst madame, who was wounded in the abdomen, managed to alight, and bravely rushed towards the murderer, shrieking for mercy and telling him that he could have all the money he owed and twenty times more if he would but spare their lives.

"No, curse you!" was his reply; "it is you're I want most!" and as the poor creature lifted her arm up before her face the bullet from the pistol crashed through breaking her wrist and penetrating the brain as she fell forward, almost upon her murderer, a corpse. Then, firing the weapon into the midst of those who remained in the vehicle, the wretch placed the pistol in his pocket, vaulted over the fence, and made off through a copse into the fields; whereupon crossing them he struck into the road leading to Tussac, once on to a village of Libauderie, some miles away from where the crime had been committed, and where some friends of his resided.

The horror expressed upon the man's face alarmed them when he presented himself and asked if he might receive shelter for the night. Thinking that Paulait had lost his reason, they decided not to admit him into the house, making the excuse that every room was occupied by the family, but offering him a place to rest in upon straw in the barn, detaining him to acquaint the gendarmes of their suspicions of the arrival of a lunatic in the morning.

Before the sun rose upon another day, though there was a hue and cry for the murderer, for it was known by the weapons and by those who escaped who had committed the atrocious deed, and before five o'clock in the morning the authorities were on the scent and had run him to his hiding-place.

The friends who had harboured him, and who had spent a sleepless night, were aroused by a hammering at their door, and the gendarmes demanded to know where the murderer was secreted. The master of the house took them to the yard, and pointed to the door of a loft near the top of the barn.

At this moment it opened, and a man in his shirt-sleeves, and his face looking ghastly white in the grey morning light, appeared. Placing a cavalry pistol to his temple there was a loud report, and the lifeless body of the murderer fell with a thud to the ground.

The affair created the greatest sensation at the time, and even to-day, when there is a question of the conveyance of property, the saying is, "This matter can be arranged *sans* Paulait."

Leaves from Our Notebook.

A Robber's Ruse.

ARTHUR CHAMBERS was executed at Tyburn in November, 1753, for housebreaking and attempted murder. It transpired during the course of the trial that he was a thief endowed with uncommon address and talent, and that he had committed numerous acts of consummate art and villainy, his achievements having been marked by boldness in their object and ingenuity in their accomplishment.

One of his robberies was committed under the following circumstances: He hired the first floor of a house and agreed with the landlord to pay fourteen shillings per week. Being taken for a man of fortune, both from his appearance and the lavish manner in which he spent money, a mutual confidence was gradually established between him and the landlord. When his plot was matured he one day entered the house with a very pensive and sorrowful look, and, proceeding to his landlord's apartment, was immediately asked the cause of his evident sorrow. Chambers, with tears in his eyes, informed him that he had just returned from Hampstead, where he had witnessed the death of a beloved brother, who had left him his sole heir, with an express injunction to convey his remains to Westminster Abbey. He therefore begged permission to bring his brother's remains at a certain hour to his house, that from there they might be conveyed to their destination. His request was readily granted.

Chambers went off the next morning, leaving word that the corpse would be there at six o'clock in the evening. At the appointed hour the hearse with six horses arrived at the door. An elegant coffin, with six gilded handles, was carried upstairs and placed upon the dining-room table, and the horses were conveyed by the men to a stable in the neighbourhood. They informed the landlord that Chambers was detained on business, and would probably sleep that night in the Strand.

The daring thief was, however, concealed in the coffin, in which air-holes had been made, the screws left loose, his clothes all on, and only a winding-sheet wrapped about him and his face whitened with flour. All the family went to bed except the maid-servant. Chambers arose from his confinement, went downstairs to the kitchen, wrapped in his winding-sheet, sat down, and stared the maid in the face, who, overwhelmed with fear, screamed out, "A ghost! a ghost!" and ran upstairs to her master's room. He ridiculed her fears, and told her to return to her room; but she obstinately refused, and remained in the room.

In a short time, however, in stalked the "ghost," took his seat, and made both master and servant perspire with fright. He remained in the room a few minutes, and then commenced to walk all over the house, banging doors about and making a noise sufficient to conceal his designs and to keep the people in the house in an abject state of fear. In the meantime, he went downstairs and opened the door to his accomplices, who assisted in carrying off the plate and everything else movable and of value, even the silver tops of the cruet in the kitchen. The maid was the first to venture from the room in the morning, and to inform her master and mistress what had happened, who, more than the night before, ridiculed her credulity in believing that a ghost could rob a house or carry away any article out of it. After a time, however, the landlord was induced to get up and go downstairs, when he found to his astonishment and chagrin that the whole of his plate and almost the whole of his movables, pictures, etc., etc., had vanished, and he had only received in return an empty coffin. On hearing of the arrest of Chambers, some time after, the landlord came forward and proved the above story.

ONGER.—The Northampton riots consequent upon the non-election of Charles Bradlaugh occurred on October 6th, 1874. They were suppressed by the military.

REX.—The *Cospatrick*, an emigrant ship, took fire at midnight, November 17-18, whilst on her way to New Zealand. Only five or six passengers and crew escaped out of 476 aboard when the conflagration broke out. They were picked up and landed at St. Helena.

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